

PREDESTINATION IS TO GLORY NOT TO FAITH

***Anti-Calvinism & Reformed Theology
Pro-Certainty of Sanctification & Glorification
In Romans 8, Romans 9, & John 6***

**WAYNE
ODONNELL**

**PREDESTINATION
IS TO GLORY
NOT TO FAITH**

Predestination Is to Glory Not to Faith Anti-Calvinism & Reformed Theology; Pro-Certainty of Sanctification & Glorification; In Romans 8, Romans 9, & John 6

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April 20, 2020

Wayne O Donnell

ISBN: 979-8638996796

To

D. Martin Lloyd-Jones for his five books on Romans 5 - 8

and

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum for his book *Footsteps of the Messiah*

About the Paintings

The cover photo is by R. Tavani/Bigstock.com. The paintings that begin each chapter are by Edward Hicks, a Quaker minister who lived near Philadelphia and painted 62 versions of his Peaceable Kingdom composition based on Isaiah 11:6-8 and 65:25.

Is. 11:1-12. There will come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, ... and the spirit of the Lord will rest on him. ... He will smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, ... and righteousness will be the girdle of his loins. . The wolf also will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child will lead them. And the cow and the bear will feed; their young ones will lie down together: and the lion will eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child will play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child will put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They will not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. . And he will set up an ensign for the [Gentile] nations, . and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Is. 65:8-25. "As new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, 'Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it,' so I will do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and my elect will inherit it. . Be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping will no more be heard in her. . My elect will long enjoy the work of their hands, . for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord. . The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the bullock; and dust will be the serpent's food. They will not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain," says the Lord.

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Introduction



All my books can be read online for free at wayneodonnell.com. Mt. 10:8, “Freely you have received, freely give.”

The Bible says we’re predestined to glory, but it doesn’t say we’re predestined to faith, as Calvinism teaches. The differences between the language of the Bible and the language of Calvinism indicate the doctrinal errors of Calvinism. All Reformed theologians teach predestination to faith, which includes faith in a sequence the Bible doesn’t include it in. The ‘Golden Chain’ of Romans 8:28-30 includes 1) foreknowledge, 2) predestination, 3) calling, 4) justification, and 5) glorification. Paul intentionally omits faith from this sequence because predestination is to glorification and sanctification, not to faith.

Paying attention to this detail alters Calvinism’s TULIP. T (Total Depravity) doesn’t include an inability to believe the gospel. Election is not U (Unconditional), since God elects all whom he has known forever in the eternal Messiah, who entered into union with him through justification by unpredestined faith. I (Irresistible Grace) is after justification, for sanctification and glorification. L

(Limited Atonement) is unbiblical. And, P (Perseverance of the Saints) is confirmed in the strongest possible way, to the extent it's synonymous with eternal security and the certainty of glorification.

Most other anti-Calvinist books deal heavily with the moral and philosophical travesties of Calvinism. For example, I highly recommend *What Love Is This*, by Dave Hunt. But this book tries to provide better expositions of the passages that lead good, godly men to accept Calvinism in the first place, like Romans 8, Romans 9, John 6, and Ephesians 1, by paying attention to the small, underappreciated detail, that the Bible says predestination is to sanctification and glory, not to faith. If I felt this task was already accomplished, I wouldn't have written this book, but would have promoted the books that already did it.

White (Calvinist):

There is no meaningful non-Reformed exegesis of [John 6:37-45] available. As numerous as the attempts of Arminian exegetes to find some way around the testimony of these verses has been, not even a plausible solution has been offered that does not require the complete dismantling of the text, redefinition of words, or the insertion of utterly foreign concepts.¹

[1 White, Potter's Freedom, 153-154.]

Flowers (Non-Calvinist):

Would anyone dare adopt or seek to defend this most troubling doctrine [of reprobation] if not for the perceived defense offered by the apostle in Romans 9?²

[2 Flowers, Potter's Promise, Kindle 169-170.]

I rejoice in biblical, non-Calvinistic predestination, to glory, not to faith! Biblical predestination is about the certainty of God's completion of our salvation through sanctification and glorification. Predestination shouldn't be a word that conjures up images of Calvinistic horrors of reprobation in the minds of those who haven't been indoctrinated to focus on the good fortunes of the elect. Instead, predestination should be a word that gives great joy, because it underlies the Biblical doctrine of the certainty of our

future glorification! Rom. 5:3, “Having been justified by faith, we ... rejoice in [the sure and certain] hope of [sharing in] the glory of God!”

My hope is that this book won't only be a defense against Calvinism and its harms, and rescue some born-again Calvinists from Calvinism; but also that this consideration of the topic of predestination will give all readers a better understanding of the justification, sanctification, and glorification that comprise our gracious salvation, and this knowledge will also make us more fruitful. Jn. 15:7-8, “If ... my words abide in you, ... herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.”

This book is the result of

- 1) a paper I wrote for a Soteriology class at Veritas International University,
- 2) my coming into contact with an increasing number of Reformed church plants, 3) my deep appreciation of D. Martin Lloyd-Jones' teaching about the certainty of the hope of our future glorification, and
- 4) my gratitude for the simple gospel message I first heard when I was fourteen years old after having been raised a Roman Catholic.

Jn. 3:36. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life.

Not, “He that is good,” or “He that goes to church,” or “He that is - predestined to- believe,” but “He that believes on the Son.” The gospel is a genuine offer for every person, in the way we usually think of an offer, and not something predetermined.

All Calvinists believe who God chose, determined who would believe. Most non-Calvinists believe God's foreknowledge of who would believe, determined whom he chose. Actually, God's foreknowledge of all in union with the eternal Messiah, which they entered through justification by non-predestinated faith, determined whom he chose.

Calvinism is a theological system built mostly on logic, and only secondarily on scripture. For example, the Westminster Confession says we're predestined to faith, not because the Bible says it, but because Calvinism's version of election logically requires it.

Westminster Confession. III (Calvinist):

As God has appointed the elect unto glory [the Bible does say this], so has He ... foreordained all the means thereunto, wherefore, they who are elected, ... are effectually called unto faith [the Bible doesn't say this].

Calvinism defends the morality of its system with philosophical technicalities. For example, God isn't 'forcing you to believe against your will' if he indirectly causes you to believe by changing your nature so you want to believe. Or God isn't 'unrighteously predestining some to hell' if he's righteously punishing the sins no one can avoid because God indirectly caused them to be sinners through birth from a fallen Adam. But many Calvinists know Calvinism is, or certainly appears to be, immoral and illogical.

Palmer (Calvinist):

The Calvinist ... realizes that what he advocates is ridiculous ... To say on the one hand that God has made certain all that ever happens, and yet to say that man is responsible for what he does? Nonsense! ... To say that God foreordains the sin of Judas, and yet Judas is to blame? Foolishness! ... The Calvinist freely admits that his position is illogical, ridiculous, nonsensical, and foolish. This is in accord with Paul, who said, "The word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness" (1 Cor. 1:18) In the face of all logic, the Calvinist says that if man does anything good, God gets all the glory; and if man does anything bad, man gets all the blame. ... The Calvinist has to make up his mind: what is his authority? His own human reason or the Word of God?1

[Palmer, Five Points, 104-5.]

Nevertheless, for those of us who know the Bible to be true, we still have to believe Calvinism if the Bible teaches it.

Grudem (Calvinist):

[Reprobation] is something that we would not want to believe, and would not believe, unless Scripture clearly taught it.4

[4 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 685.]

But does scripture teach it?

Spurgeon (Calvinist):

The old truth that Calvin preached, that Augustine preached, that Paul preached, is the truth that I must preach to-day. ... I have my own private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel.⁵

[⁵ Spurgeon, Defense of Calvinism, Kindle 2-3, 30-35, 104-105.]

In contrast to Spurgeon equating the gospel to Calvinism, this book is a defense of the gospel against Calvinism. Probably most Christians had no idea what Calvinism was when they first believed. They have to be gradually indoctrinated into it, like a person studying science in our schools has to be gradually indoctrinated as to how the complex workings of our universe, which have a strong appearance of design, supposedly came about by chance.

Spurgeon (Calvinist):

When I was coming to Christ, I thought I was doing it all myself ... I do not think the young convert is at first aware of this. I can recall the very day and hour when first I received those truths [of Calvinism] in my own soul ... I can recollect how I felt that I had grown on a sudden from a babe into a man.⁶

[⁶ Ibid.]

Spurgeon, like many other Calvinists, speaks of his post-salvation experience of accepting Calvinism in language believers normally use to describe their salvation experience. But an important principle D. M. Lloyd-Jones taught was that our justification experience is the only big event in our lives until glorification. There's no post-salvation, "second blessing" experience. And there's no post-salvation "doctrines of grace" experience either. It's our having been justified that makes the big difference in our lives. Calvinism isn't the gospel, but competition to the gospel.

The verses quoted in this book are from the King James Version, with the English modernized. I've also consistently replaced the word "Christ" with "Messiah", because no one knows what a "Christ" is, except for its religious overtones; but everyone knows what a "Messiah" is. Both "Christ," in Greek, and "Messiah," in Hebrew, are transliterations of words meaning "Anointed." I also quote extensively from the CV, Calvinist Version. It's quite different from the KJV and all the other versions. ;)



Romans 8. Predestined to Glory Not to Faith

All Reformed theologians teach predestination to faith, either directly or indirectly. But teaching predestination to faith includes faith in a sequence the Bible doesn't include it in. The 'Golden Chain' of Romans 8:28-30 includes 1) foreknowledge, 2) predestination, 3) calling, 4) justification, and 5) glorification. Paul intentionally omits faith from this sequence, because predestination is to glorification, not to faith, not even indirectly.

Steele and Thomas say Calvinists believe "God's choice of the sinner, not the sinner's choice of Christ, is the ultimate cause of salvation," whereas non-Calvinists believe "the sinner's choice of Christ, not God's choice of the sinner, is the ultimate cause of salvation."⁷[⁷ *Steele, Romans, 144-45.*] But that definition is too imprecise. Both Calvinists and non-Calvinists believe God's choice of the sinner is the ultimate cause of salvation (which is entirely provided by God), meaning justification,

sanctification, and glorification. But is it the ultimate cause of the sinner's faith?

Anthony Badger says the problem with the non-Calvinist view is "what would be the point of actively electing some and not others if God simply knew how man would react? Why wouldn't God just wait and let the chips fall where they may, so to speak?"⁸ [⁸Badger, *TULIP: Unconditional Election*, 36.] Badger would have a point if predestination was to faith, but there is no circular reasoning in the non-Calvinist view when election, predestination, and calling are to salvation, not to faith.

All Calvinists Teach Predestination to Faith

Predestination to faith was first taught by Augustine around 400 A. D., and then (except for a few exceptions like Gottschalk in 804-869) not heavily promoted again until the 1500's during the time of Calvin.

Boettner (Calvinist):

The doctrine of Predestination, ... this cardinal truth of Christianity, was first clearly seen by Augustine. ... From the time of Augustine until the time of the Reformation very little emphasis was placed on the doctrine of Predestination.⁹

[⁹Boettner, *Calvinism in History*.]

Although all Reformed theologians teach predestination to faith, surprisingly, in a book entitled *Predestined to Believe*¹⁰ [¹⁰Murrell, *Predestined to Believe*, 120.], by Adam Murrell, I couldn't find a single phrase about being elected, predestined, or called to believe, except for the title. Also, in the book *Called to Believe: A Brief Introduction to Christian Doctrine*¹¹ [¹¹Mueller, *Called to Believe*.], used in the Lutheran Church, I found only two mentions of the phrase 'called to believe,' with no accompanying Bible references. This shows how little attention is commonly given to this issue. I quote many Calvinists below in chronological

order, and Calvin at length, because he seems to have understood, better than those who followed him, that predestination to faith is the real heart of his system.

Augustine (354-430):

Men ... are ... elected to believe. ... He chose us ... that we might believe. ... We [are] called ... that we may believe. ... Whom He predestined, He calls to repentance.¹²

[¹²Augustine, On Predestination, Kindle 90239-154526.]

Johann von Staupitz (Luther's Mentor, 1460-1524):

It has been decreed that some should be elected and predestined ... to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who do not have faith are judged already.¹³

[¹³ Staupitz, Eternal Predestination, in Oberman, Forerunners, p.125.]

Zwingli (1484-1531):

Faith ... is the fruit of election, predestination and calling. . He who believes, . believes therefore because he has been elected and predestined. . Faith is not by human power, but God's. He therefore gives it to those whom he has called, . whom he has destined, . whom he has elected. . Are we not justified by faith? Yes, but calling precedes faith. . Faith . is inferior and posterior to election, predestination or calling. But why is salvation attributed to faith above the others? Why does Paul use this link out of the chain? I reply, because that is best known to us.¹⁴

[⁴ Zwingli, Selected Works, Kindle 3687.]

Luther (1515):

All things whatever arise from, and depend on, the divine appointment; whereby it was foreordained who should receive the word of life, and who should disbelieve it.¹⁵

[¹⁵ Luther, Commentary on Romans, in Boettner, Predestination, Kindle 251-252.]

Calvin (1554):

[1] We were as much ordained to faith in Christ before the foundation of the world, as we were chosen to the inheritance of eternal life in Christ. ... [2, quoting Augustine] If it be investigated and inquired how it is that each receiver of faith is deemed of God worthy to receive such a gift, ... it is by grace, or Divine predestination." ... [3] That no one might attribute it to faith that one is preferred above another, Augustine testifies that men are . chosen that they might believe. ... [4] Faith could not possibly have existed except that God had then appointed it for us ... [5] Election is the cause and the beginning of all faith, ... therefore, election is, in [logical] order, before faith. . [6] "He hath from the beginning chosen such believers unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," in which words the apostle traces faith and sanctification to the eternal election of God as its source and cause ... [6] Were these chosen because they had sanctified themselves and rendered themselves meet or worthy? . The nature of faith is the same, and equally the gift of God. . [7] Paul in that chapter [Eph. 1] traces the faith by which the children of God enter upon the possession of their salvation unto eternal election as its true and only source; and most certainly faith is especially to be reckoned among those spiritual riches which are freely given to us in Christ. . Wherefore, if faith be the fruit of Divine election, it is at once evident that all are not enlightened unto faith. Hence, it is also an indubitable fact that those on whom God determined in Himself to bestow faith were chosen of Him from everlasting for that end. . [8] Those only believe whom God enlightens, . election is the mother of faith. . [9] "That the election of God might stand," those who were once blind are "illuminated" unto faith.¹⁶

[16 Calvin, *Eternal Predestination*, Kindle [1] 66-67, [2] 193-194, [3] 209-210, [4] 289-290, [5] 298-299, [6] 1009-1013, [7] 1872-1877, [8] 2085-2086, [9] 2091-2092.]

Knox (1559):

Election ... is the fountain from which springeth faith. . What foolishness were it therefore to reason: 'My faith is the cause of my election'?"¹⁷

[¹⁷Knox, *On Predestination*, 157.]

Lutheran Formula of Concord (1580):

When the Word of God is preached, [man] ... remains an enemy of God, until he ... is endowed with faith ... without any cooperation of his own. ... Eph. 2:8: It is the gift of God. ... Man's will that is to be converted does nothing . until he is regenerate. . The eternal election of God . not only foresees . but is also . a cause which procures . our salvation and what pertains thereto ... Acts 13:48: And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.¹⁸

[18 Formula of Concord, II. Free Will, or Human Powers, XI. Election.]

Canons of Dort (1619):

Faith ... is a free gift of God. ... (Eph. 2:8). . Faith . and the other saving gifts . flow forth from election. . Some have not been chosen or have been passed by in God's eternal election, . concerning whom God [decided] not to grant them saving faith.¹⁹

[9 Canons of Dordt, Articles 5-6, 9, 15.]

Westminster Confession (1647):

As God has appointed the elect unto glory, so has He . foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore, they who are elected, . are effectually called unto faith in Christ. . When he decreed to save those who should believe, he decreed to give them faith, . 'the gift of God,'.²⁰

[20 Westminster Confession, Chapter III, Of God's Eternal Decree; Robert Shaw, Reformed Faith, Chapters III and XIV.]

Owen (1616-1683):

" Faith ... is the gift of God;" it is " the work of God, that we believe," Jn. 6:29. . We choose Christ by faith; God chooseth us by his decree of election. The question is, Whether we choose him because he hath chosen us, or he chooseth us because we have chosen him, and so indeed choose ourselves? . Our choice of him is a gift he himself bestoweth only on them whom he hath chosen.²¹

[21 Owen, Life and Works, Kindle 101302-101309.]

Gill (1697-1771):

True faith is called the faith of God's elect; and those that have it, have it not of themselves, it is the gift of God.²²

[22 Gill, Everlasting Covenant, Kindle 1302-1304.]

A. A. Hodge (1823-1886):

God had also foreseen ... His elect ones, whom He had chosen. ... All whom the Father giveth to the Son, . I will give them faith ... The same mind that sovereignly predestinated the elect to salvation, . he designed . efficaciously to communicate to them faith and repentance.²³

[23 Hodge, et al., God's Design, Kindle 129-784.]

Spurgeon (1834-1892):

Those have ... the most ardent devotion, who believe that they are saved . through faith . not of themselves, it is the gift of God.²⁴

[24 Spurgeon, Defense of Calvinism, Kindle 219-221.]

Berkhof (1938):

Election ... determine[s] with absolute certainty the end unto which man is predestined and the means by which that end is realized. . God is the author of the regeneration, calling, faith, justification, and sanctification, of the elect, and thus by direct action on them brings their election to realization.²⁵

[25 Berkhof, Systematic Theology, 88.]

Chafer (1947):

Election is unto faith. ... It is no slight error to confuse these issues and make faith . the cause and election the effect. Faith can serve no greater purpose than to be the means by which that which God has determined may be realized. . God chose from the beginning those to be saved and then predestinated them to "belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2:13).²⁶

[26 Chafer, Soteriology, 404.]

Lloyd-Jones (1975):

Before the term 'justification' [in Rom. 8:30], . he has to introduce the factor that brings us to faith. . So the meaning can be stated . 'Whom he predestinated, them he also called to believe.' Faith . is something that He Himself brings into being. . By a logical necessity from the statement about foreknowledge, . it is the gift of God.²⁷

[27 Lloyd-Jones, Romans, 243-244.]

Sproul (1997):

The Reformed view holds that we are elected unto faith ... Reformed Theology sees faith as the result of election ... Reformed Theology teaches that faith itself is a gift given to the elect. (Eph. 2:8-10) Faith is a result of the Spirit's sovereign work of regeneration.²⁸

[28 Sproul, Reformed Theology, 170-183.]

Demarest (1997)

The ... hearers believed because appointed to life. ... [In] the golden chain of salvation presented in Rom 8:29-30, . he justifies individuals . who are moved to saving faith. . God graciously invaded the heart and brought it to faith.²⁹

[29 Demarest, Salvation, 103-104, 115.]

Palmer (1980):

The question is: ... is faith also a gift of God (Eph. 2:8)? Does salvation depend ... wholly on God (the giving of Christ to die for us plus the giving of our faith)? Does man keep just a little bit of glory for himself—the ability to believe? ... The teaching of total depravity is that God gets all the glory, and man none. ... When Paul says that God chose the Thessalonians “to be saved,” this, of course, implies that God chose to give them the only means for getting that salvation, namely, faith.³⁰

[30 Palmer, The Five Points, 23, 36.]

Ryrie (1999):

Election emphasizes God's free choice of individuals to salvation. . As many as were set (previous to their believing) in the group of those who would have eternal life did believe (Acts 13:48). . The Effective Call: This is the call that only the elect respond to through faith. . This is God's work. . Faith is also part of the total package of salvation that is the gift of God (Eph. 2:9).³¹

[31 Ryrie, Basic Theology, Kindle 5768-5771, 6051-6053.]

Gelsler (2001):

“All who were appointed [by God] for eternal life believed” (Acts 13:48). ... “They [Paul and Barnabas] spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed” (Acts 14:1). . Even if this text [13:48] is taken . in the

strong sense, there is no contradiction between preordination and persuasion, since God preordained the means (persuasion) with the end (eternal life).³²

[32 Geisler, Chosen But Free, 40-41.]

Mueller (2006):

Since we cannot save ourselves or even come to him by ourselves, he sends his Holy Spirit who calls us to faith. ... He calls us to faith by the means of grace.³³

[33 Mueller, Called to Believe, 183.]

Piper (2013):

Those whom God had elected, believed. God's election preceded faith and made it possible ... Between the act of predestination and justification, there is the act of calling. Since justification is only by faith, the calling in view must be the act of God whereby he calls faith into being. . Whoever believes has been "called" into faith by the sovereign grace of God.³⁴

[34 Piper, Five Points, Kindle 645-646, 723-724, 731-732.]

Fruchtenbaum (2014):

God's salvation grace is irresistible, and for that reason, the elect will respond to this grace and choose to believe. . By special, divine enabling of the elect, they are able to exercise the faith they need to receive the free gift of salvation. . Nobody forced us to believe. But the grace of God worked on us in such a way that we chose to believe.³⁵

[35 Fruchtenbaum, God's Will, 10, 70, 142.]

Grudem (2015):

Long ago God had chosen them, and therefore they had believed. . "God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth," (2 Thess. 2: 13). . . He sought us, worked in our hearts in a mysterious way, and enabled us to believe, before we came to trust in him.³⁶

[36 Grudem, Systematic Theology, 672, 708.]

MacArthur (2017):

Repeatedly the Word of God tells us that the source and the reason for regeneration is purely God's grace, not the sinner's own faith. We must not

confuse the effect with the cause ... Every aspect of salvation ... including the sinner's faith ... is done for us freely. "It is the gift of God," ... (Eph. 2:8- 9).³¹

[31 MacArthur, Gospel According to Paul, Kindle 2348-2359.]

Did you notice an over-dependence on only three verses in all these quotations: Eph. 2:8, Acts 13:48, and 2 Thess. 2:13? If these three scriptures are misinterpreted because they're approached from a pre-conceived Calvinistic framework, the Calvinist doctrine of predestination to faith collapses.

Non-Calvinists Don't Teach Predestination to Faith

Arminius (1560 - 1609):

Is it election to faith? By no means; but it is election to righteousness [based on Rom. 9:30-32 and 11:5-7]. ³¹

[31 Arminius, Complete Works, Kindle 23713.]

Godet (1883):

The predestination of which Paul speaks is not a predestination to faith, but a predestination to glory.³¹

[31 Godet, Romans, Kindle 9185.]

Forster (2013):

Augustine [caused confusion by applying] to the election of the believers, . Christ's words to the twelve apostles. . "Who can hear the Lord saying, 'You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and can dare to say that men believe in order to be elected, when they are rather elected to believe.'" ³¹

[31 Forster, God's Strategy, Volume 2, Kindle 6045-6047.]

Pinnock/Wagner (2015):

The Calvinist says, "God unconditionally selects certain sinners and predestines them to become believers." This is contrary to the teaching of Scripture. . It is important to see exactly what it is to which individuals are elected. . They are not predestined to faith. Their choice of Jesus Christ is not predestined; the choice is foreknown, and the subsequent blessings of

salvation are then predestined. The Bible is quite clear about this. Rom 8:29.⁴¹

[41 Pinnock, Grace for All, Kindle 2240-2248.]

Hunt (2006):

Although the Calvinist tries to say that the faith to believe is given by God in order to cause the elect to believe, that idea hardly fits the analogy of eating and drinking. ... There is no hint that the bread of life is force-fed to the elect through Irresistible Grace.⁴²

[42 Hunt, What Love, Kindle 11175-11178.]

Flowers (2017):

Paul teaches that those “in Him” have been predestined to become “holy and blameless” and “to be adopted as sons,” but he never says that certain individuals were predestined to believe in Christ.⁴³

[43 Flowers, Potter's Promise, Kindle 1089-1090.]

The Golden Chain of Romans 8 Excludes Faith

Rom. 8:1, 28-30. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Messiah Jesus. ... And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did [1] FOREKNOW, he also did [2] PREDESTINATE to be conformed to the image of his Son so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also [3] CALLED: and whom he called, them he also [4] JUSTIFIED: and whom he justified, them he also [5] GLORIFIED.

The intrusion of “to be conformed to the image of his Son so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren” into the “whom he X’d, them he also Y’d” pattern shows that glorification, sharing in Messiah’s glory, is the ultimate goal and purpose of our salvation. That’s why

predestination is to glory.

The Golden Chain includes foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. It indirectly includes election, union in Messiah, and regeneration. But it excludes repentance, faith, and sanctification.

Election is indirectly included in the chain because it's comprised of foreknowledge, the passive part of election, and predestination, the active part of election, that moves foreknowledge forward. "Election" and "choosing" in the KJV are translated from the same Greek word. We are not foreknown "to" anything. But we are elected and chosen "to" particular future events to make sure they occur.

Union in Messiah is indirectly included in the chain because it's both chronologically and logically simultaneous with justification. A person is justified through union with Messiah at the point of Messiah's death so that Messiah's death counts for him, but a person can't receive the blessing of union with Messiah unless the legal obstacle of sin is removed; so both things have to happen simultaneously, both chronologically and logically.

Rom. 6:3. As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah [by one Spirit at justification, 1 Cor. 12:13] were baptized into his death [into him at the point of his death, in his experience, and at the point of our belief, in our experience).

Regeneration is indirectly included in the chain because it's part of justification. It's chronologically simultaneous with, but logically subsequent to, justification.

A righteous God can't logically bestow the blessing of regeneration, and the receipt of the indwelling Holy Spirit, on anyone until the legal obstacles of their sin and condemnation are removed through justification.

Gal. 4:6. To redeem them [requirement of justification] ... so that we would receive sonship; and because you are sons [legal heirs], God has sent

forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts [receipt of the indwelling Spirit].

Acts 2:38. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Messiah for the remission of sins [requirement of justification], and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit [receipt of regeneration and the indwelling Spirit].

Rom. 5:5-11. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us [only after the legal obstacles are removed], for when we were yet without strength, . Messiah died for the ungodly.

God's grace is always effective and always accomplishes his purposes. But God's salvation grace is only in Messiah and not outside of him. Only after the legal problems are solved, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10); can we begin receiving the "much mores" of God's grace.

Rom. 5:9. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we will be saved from wrath [glorification] through him.

Rom. 5:10. Much more, being reconciled, we will be saved [glorification] by his life.

Rom. 5:15. Much more, the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Messiah, has abounded [sanctification] to many.

Rom. 5:17. Much more, they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life [sanctification] by one, Jesus Messiah.

Rom. 5:20. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound [sanctification].

Calvinism claims the blessing of regeneration is a requirement that precedes justification, and the removal of the legal obstacles to grace. They teach men are given "the mind of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:27), of Romans chapter 8; before receiving "the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Messiah, ... [and] the remission of sins" of Romans chapter 3:22, 25! If Calvinism is true, Paul was very

remiss to not mention regeneration in his treatise on justification in Romans 3.

PAUL'S ORDER OF CHAPTERS IN ROMANS VS. CALVIN			
Paul's Order		Calvinism's Order	
1-3a	Condemnation	1-3a	Condemnation
		8a	Regeneration
3b-4	Justification	3b-4	Justification
5-11	Sanctification & Glorification	5-7, 8b- 11	Sanctification & Glorification

If God can righteously regenerate, and give spiritual blessings like regeneration to unjustified men, why did he send his Son to suffer and die to provide justification instead of just regenerating everyone he wanted to and then glorifying them? Regeneration before justification would be regeneration on credit, before payment was applied to an individual's account. But why would God go into debt?

Biblically, Jesus can't righteously give the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit until both Jesus purchased redemption through his death, and his payment is applied to the sinner's account by faith. Regeneration is being born of the Spirit, and you can't receive the Spirit until after you believe.

Jn. 7:38-39. He that [1] believes on me, ... [2] out of his belly will flow rivers of living water, ... the Spirit, which [1] they that believe on him [2] would receive.

Eph. 1:13. After you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit.

God can't provide regeneration before justification by faith and remain righteous. Either the righteousness of God, or the Calvinistic doctrine of regeneration before faith, has to go, and God remaining righteous is even more important than our being saved.

Rom. 3:4, 26. So that you [God] might be justified ... when you are judged ... To declare [God's] righteousness for the remission of sins. . To declare ... [God's] righteousness that he might be [simultaneously] just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.

Not only is regeneration chronologically simultaneous with, and logically subsequent to justification, but also to union in Messiah. Regeneration is chronologically simultaneous with union in Messiah, because we are joined to Messiah through the indwelling Holy Spirit, that gives us new birth and indwelling.

Spirit and Union Chronologically Simultaneous. 1 Cor. 1:13. By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body [union].

But regeneration is logically subsequent to union.

Jn. 1:4. In him [union] was life [beginning with regeneration].

Jn. 6:57. He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood [believes], dwells in me and I in him [union]. As ... I live by the Father, so he that eats me [by faith and thus has union with me], even he will live [regeneration+] by me.

Jn. 14:6. I [union] am ... the life.

Jn. 14:19. Because I live [union], you will live [regeneration+] also.

Sanctification isn't part of the golden chain because: 1) It's partly synergistic. It's monergistic in certainty, but it's synergistic in quantity. 2) It's a process instead of a point-in-time event like the aorist (past) tense verbs in the chain: foreknown, predestined, called, justified, glorified. And, 3) it doesn't connect to the next link in the chain, glorification. The certainty of our future glorification is not dependent on the quality of our present sanctification, but on the fact of our past justification.

Repentance isn't part of the Golden Chain because it's irrelevant to salvation. Otherwise, John would have been very negligent not to mention it even once in his gospel about how to receive eternal life. And Paul would have been very negligent to omit the word from his treatise on justification in Romans 3-4.

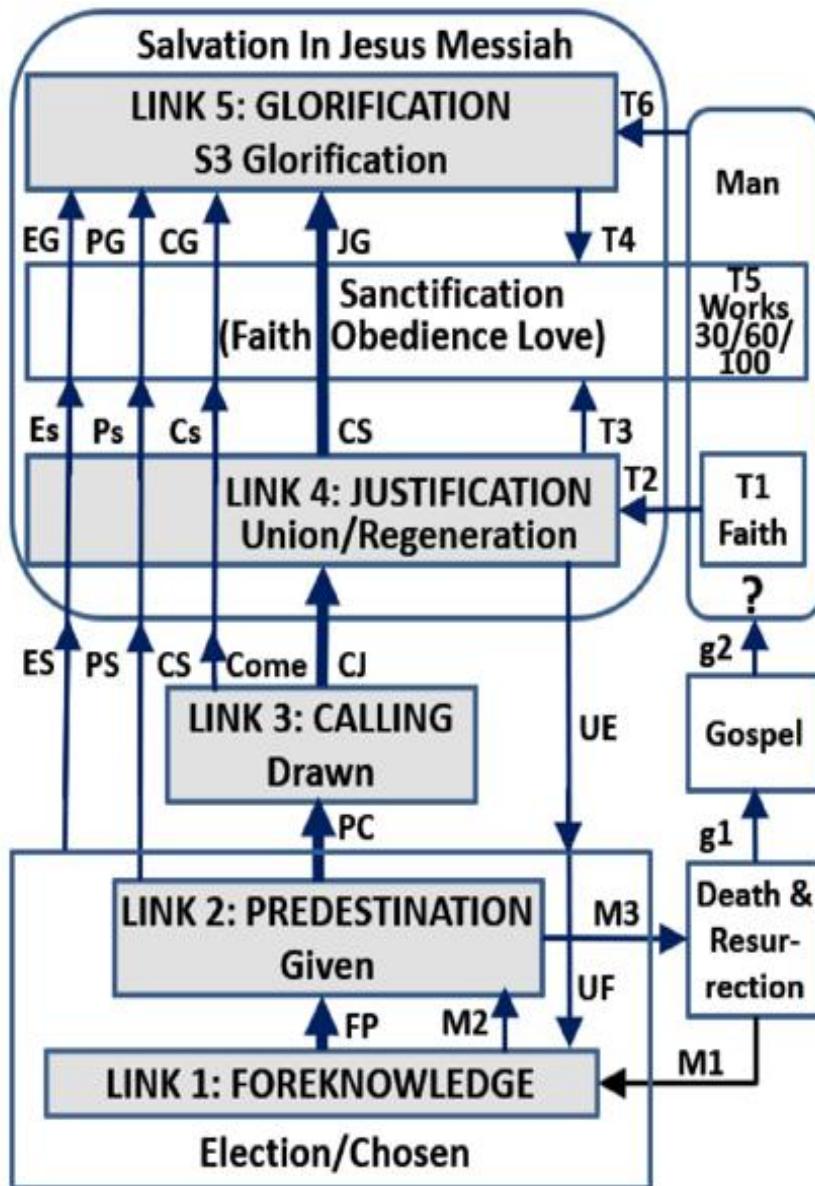
Jn. 20:31. These are written, so that ... believing [no repentance required] you would have life.

Matthew chapters 1-10 say John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles preached a Nineveh-like, city-wide, and nationwide repentance as the condition for setting up the Messianic Kingdom for that generation of Israel (Matt. 3:2, 4:17, 10:7). But after the cities, not merely individuals, refused to repent in chapters 11 and 12, Jesus and the apostles no longer preached repentance in chapters 13-28.

Matt. 11:20; 12:41. Then he began to scold the cities in which most of his mighty works were done, because they didn't repent. ... The men of Nineveh will rise in judgment with this generation ... because they repented.

Faith isn't part of the Golden Chain because: 1) It's not predestined. The Bible never includes faith in any chain of causation that includes election, predestination, or calling. That's the main point of this book, and particularly this section on Romans 8. And, 2) it's completely synergistic (unlike sanctification which is synergistic only in quantity). Faith is dependent on the Holy Spirit's enablement only, through the gospel, and on the free-will assent of man.

Golden Chain (GC) Diagram of Romans 8



C=CALLING. E=ELECTION. F=FOREKNOWLEDGE. G=GLORIFICATION. G=GOSPEL. J=JUSTIFICATION. M=MESSIAH. P=PREDESTINATION. T=TIME. S=SALVATION. S=SANCTIFICATION. U=UNION. (M1) 1PET 1:18-20 (M2) (M3) ACTS 2:22 (UF) RM 16:13 EPH 1:4 1 PET 1:2 (FG) (Fs) (FS) 1PET 1:2 (FP) RM 8:29A (EG) 1 PET 1:2-7 (Es) 1 PET 2:9 (ES) 2 TH 2:13 (PG) RM 8:29B JN 6:39 (Ps) EPH 2:10 JN 15:16 (PS) JN 6:37A 17:2-3 (PC) RM 8:30A (CG) 1TH 2:12 JN 6:37B (Cs) 1TH 4:7 (CS) 1COR 1:9:30 JN 6:44A (JG) RM 8:30C TIT 3:7 JN 6:40C (g1) 1COR 15:1-4 (g2) RM 1:16 (T1) EPH 2:8-9 (T2 JUST.) RM 3:28 (T2 UNION) JN 6:56 1JN 1:3 (T2 REGEN.) JN 6:40A (T3) RM 6:3-7:4 (T4) COL 1:4-5 (T5) MT 13:23 (SALVATION) 1COR 1:30

The five Links of the Golden Chain of Romans 8:28-30 are shown in shaded boxes with heavy arrows going up the center of the chart. Each step in the diagram is labelled by abbreviations so we can easily refer to them. Like Foreknowledge > FP > Predestination > PC > Calling > CJ > Justification > JG > Glorification. M1 - M3 represent events about the Messiah. G1 - G2 represent events about the Gospel. T1 - T6 represent events that occur to a person within Time.

Election includes foreknowledge and predestination. And Salvation includes Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification; all three parts of which are in Messiah “Yeshua,” meaning Salvation. Justification is a past spiritual, event; sanctification is a present, spiritual process; and glorification is a future, physical event.

Rom. 5:1-2. Therefore having been justified by faith [justification: past spiritual event], ... *we* have had access by faith into this grace wherein we stand [sanctification: present spiritual process], and rejoice in hope of the glory of God [glorification: future physical event].

THE THREE TENSES OF SALVATION			
	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
SPIRITUAL	EVENT Justification	PROCESS Sanctification	
PHYSICAL			EVENT Glorification

Notice man’s entry point into the Golden Chain is at T2, Faith to Justification, through God’s foreknowledge of us in his eternal Son, UF (Union to Foreknowledge), even though foreknowledge, predestination, election, and calling precede justification chronologically. The entry point into the chain doesn’t begin with Election or Predestination, or a Foreknowledge that acts like Predestination, as Calvinism teaches.

When the phrase “eternal life” is used outside the Gospel of John, it usually emphasizes glorification. Inside the Gospel of John, “eternal life” refers primarily to justification that results in regeneration;

and secondarily to a life that is eternal via resurrection and glorification.

Outside the Gospel of John. Rom. 5:21. So that as sin has reigned to death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life [glorification].

For the rest of this section, it's also good to remember, that in the KJV, "righteousness" and "justification" are translated from the same Greek word, "δικαιοσύνη" (dikeosune). And "faith" and "believe" are translated from the same Greek word "πιστός" (pistos).

On the left side of the diagram, there are three vertical lines, with three arrows each, that will provide the main focus of this section. This is because all three active parts of predestination - Predestination, Election, and Calling - ensure by God's decree, all three parts of salvation - Glorification, Sanctification, and Justification. Foreknowledge doesn't decree anything because it's the passive part of election.

Glorification is considered first in the discussion of each part of predestination, since predestination is primarily to glorification, because that's God's ultimate purpose in salvation.

Rom. 8:29. Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son [glorification].

Sanctification is considered second, because it's the next most important purpose of salvation. It's the purpose of our justification, and something we're predestined to.

Rom. 6:4. We are buried with him by baptism into death [justification], so that like as Messiah, ... we also would walk in newness of life [sanctification].

Eph. 2:10. We are his workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we would walk in them.

And lastly, election to salvation in general is considered, including justification and union in Messiah. God doesn't decree who will believe, but his providence ensures nothing can prevent those he foreknows in Messiah from being born, hearing the gospel, etc.

REDUNDANT DECREES TO ALL THREE PARTS OF SALVATION (Underlined verses are cited in the Golden Chain chart.)				
	Glorification		Sanctification	Salvation
Foreknowledge	Passive, not Active			
Election	Rm 11:5,7,15 2Tim 2:10 Tit 1:1-3 Jam 2:5	<u>1Pet 1:2-7</u> Rev 17:14 Rev 21:27	Eph 1:1 1Cor 12:1,9-11 Jam 1:18-19 1Pet 1:2 <u>1Pet 2:9</u>	1Ths 1:3-4 <u>2Ths 2:13</u> 1Pet 1:2 Rom 11:5,7 2Tim 2:10
Predestination	Jn 6:39 Jn 17:2-3 Act 13:48 <u>Rm 8:29</u> Rm 9:23-24	1Cor 2:7 Eph 1:5 Eph 1:11-12 1Ths 5:8-10	<u>Jn 15:16</u> 1Cor 12:18-28 <u>Eph 2:10</u>	<u>Jn 6:37a</u> Jn 6:65 <u>Jn 17:2-3</u>
Calling	<u>Jn 6:37b</u> Jn 6:44 Rm 8:28-30 Rm 9:23-24 Eph 1:18-20 Eph 4:4 <u>1Ths 2:12</u> 1Ths 5:23-24 2Ths 1:5-12 2Ths 2:14 1Tm 6:12-19	2Tm 1:9-10 Heb 3:1 Heb 9:15-16 Heb 11:8 1Pet 5:10 2Pet 1:3,10-11 Jud 1:1 Rev 17:14 Rev 19:9	Act 2:38-39 Rm 1:6-7 1Cor 1:2 1Cor 7:15 1Cor 7:18-24 Gal 1:6 Gal 1:15-16 Gal 5:8,13 Eph 4:1-2 Phl 3:14-15 Col 3:14-15 <u>1Ths 4:7</u> 1Pet 1:15 1Pet 2:9 1Pet 3:8-9	<u>Jn 6:44</u> Rm 8:30b <u>1Cor 1:9, 24-30</u>

The numbers in the following section heading match the numbers in the diagram of “The Golden Chain of Romans 8.” In the verses that follow, I often try to show the prerequisite or cause by underlining it, and the receipt or effect by putting it in all caps.

GC Diagram Pg 39, Messiah (M)

M1. Death & Resurr. to Foreknowledge

Jesus’ suffering and glorification to provide our redemption was foreknown from eternity past.

Jn. 17:24. Father, I will that they also, whom you have given me, be with me where I am; so that they may behold MY [future] GLORY [glorification], which you have given me; for you loved me before the foundation of the world.

1 Pet. 1:18-20. You were ... redeemed with ... the precious blood of Messiah as of A LAMB [suffering], ... foreknown [προγινώσκω, pro-ginosko] before the foundation of the world.

Election is the active part of foreknowledge. It is not primarily the selection of a person, as if anyone else could be Messiah, but

choosing them TO something.

Isaiah 42:1. Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my elect [בחיר , bachir], in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit on him; he will bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

Luke 23:35. Messiah, the chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos] of God.

1 Pet. 2:3-6. The Lord is gracious, ... a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos] of God; ... a chief corner stone, elect [εκλεκτός, eklektos], precious; and he that believes on him will not be confounded.

M3. Predestination to Suffering & Glory, not Obedience

Jesus was predestined to provide our redemption. He was predestined to suffering and glory to ensure nothing could prevent his having an opportunity to obey, but his obedience itself was not predestined. The Father's foreknowledge of his obedience influenced the Father's choosing and election of him to the task, but the obedience itself was not caused, but was genuinely offered. Likewise, our faith was not predestined or caused.

In eternity past, Messiah chose to do the Father's will and go to the cross to provide salvation; but God, foreknowing Messiah's obedience, predestinated redemption by providentially controlling the surrounding circumstances, like he does to fulfill all prophecy. God had to control parts of the future via predestination, like the existence of the Roman Empire, their use of crucifixion for capital punishment, their sovereignty over Israel, Israel's loss of the right to execute people, etc. But God didn't cause Yeshua's obedience, and likewise he doesn't cause anyone's sin or faith when he ensures their glorification and sanctification via his foreknowledge and predestination.

Foreknowledge always has to work together with predestination for either of them to be effective. God has to know all the possibilities that can happen to predestine the specific details he chooses to

predestine. He doesn't predetermine everything; where each piece of dust will be at every point in time, or "even sin," as Calvinism claims.

Palmer (Calvinist):

God is in back of everything. He decides and causes all things to happen that do happen; the moving of a finger, the beating of a heart, the laughter of a girl, the mistake of a typist - even sin."44

[44 Palmer, Five Points, 30.]

No! God created beings that can choose, and allows choice within bounds, and accomplishes his purposes by alternate means no matter what those beings choose. God only predestines whatever events in the future are necessary to fulfil prophecy and accomplish his purposes and plans. He only predestines things like the death of Messiah as a sacrifice for our sins, the establishment of the future Messianic Kingdom, each believer's glorification, etc. God didn't predestine anyone to faith or unbelief. He prearranged things so that whether a person chooses one thing or it's alternative, God's purposes will still be accomplished, though by different means, though he knew what they would choose.

For example, God raised up Pharaoh to manifest his power to the world. Pharaoh had a genuine choice whether or not to honor God and help Israel travel to Canaan, or to refuse. Either way God's purpose for Israel to go to Canaan would be accomplished, though on one hand it would have been through Egypt's blessing, and on the other through Egypt's destruction. See the section entitled "Rom. 9:17-18. Pharaoh's Choice" for a detailed treatment of this subject.

Likewise, if Israel had accepted Yeshua as Messiah, the Romans would still have crucified him as King of the Jews, but forty years later when Titus attacked Jerusalem, Yeshua would have returned and set up the kingdom for that generation of Israel, and you and I would have been born during the Kingdom, when birth rates will be increased. But since God foreknew Israel would reject Yeshua, he sent John as his forerunner instead of sending Elijah.

Mal. 4:5. I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the ... day of the Lord.

Mt. 11:13-14. All the prophets ... prophesied until John. And if you [had been] will[ing to] receive it, this is [would have been] Elijah, which was to come.

The following verses show Jesus was predestined to suffering and glory, not to obedience; like we were predestined to sanctification and glorification, not to faith.

Predestined to Glory, not Obedience. Jn. 17:5. GLORIFY ME [future glorification, not predestined obedience] with your own self with the glory which I had with you before the world was.

Predestined to Death, not Obedience. Luke 22:22. The Son of man GOES [not 'obeys'] as it was determined [ορίζω, oridzo], ... but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!

Predestined to Suffering and Glory, not Obedience. Acts 2:22-27. Jesus of Nazareth, ... him, being DELIVERED [to suffering, not 'made obedient'] by the determinate [ορίζω, oridzo] counsel [βουλή, bouly] and foreknowledge [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis] of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God has RAISED UP [to resurrection and glorification, not "made obedient"], having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he would be held of it. For David speaks concerning him, 'I foresaw [προοράω, pro-orao] the Lord always before my face, ... my flesh will rest in HOPE [of resurrection and glorification, not of being made obedient], because you will not leave my soul in hell, neither will you allow your Holy One to see corruption.'

Predestined to Suffering, not Obedience. Acts 3:13-18. God . has glorified his Son Jesus whom you delivered up, and denied, . and killed the Prince of life, whom God has raised from the dead. . Those THINGS which God before had showed [προ-καταγγέλλω, pro-katangello] by the mouth of all his prophets that Messiah should SUFFER [not 'obey'], he has so fulfilled.

Predestined to Suffering, not Obedience. Acts 4:27-28. Against your holy child Jesus, . the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together to do whatever your hand and your counsel [βουλή, bouly] determined before [προορίζω, pro-oridzo] TO BE DONE [suffering, not obedience].

Predestined to Glory, not Obedience. Acts 10:42. He which was ordained [ορίζω, oridzo] of God TO BE THE JUDGE [not 'to obey'] of quick and dead.

Predestined to Glory, not Obedience. Acts 17:31. He has appointed [ἵστημι, istymi] a day in the which he will JUDGE THE WORLD [not 'obey'] ... by that man whom he has ordained [ορίζω, oridzo], whereof he has given assurance to all men, in that he has raised him from the dead.

Predestined to Glory, not Obedience. Rom. 1:4. Messiah our Lord, ... declared [ορίζω, oridzo] to be the Son of God with power ... by the RESURRECTION from the dead [predestined glorification, not obedience].

Predestined to Glory, not Obedience. Heb. 1:2-3. His Son, whom he has appointed [τίθημι, tithymi] HEIR [not 'obedient'] of all things, . the brightness of his GLORY.

Predestined to Suffering and Glory, not Obedience. 1 Pet. 1:10-11, 20-21. The prophets ... testified beforehand [προμαρτύρομαι, pro-martyromai] the SUFFERINGS of Messiah and the GLORY that should follow [not 'the obedience']. . Who verily was foreknown [προγινώσκω, pro-ginosko] before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you God ... raised him up from the dead, and gave him GLORY [glorification], that your faith and HOPE might be in God.

Predestined to Suffering, not Obedience. Rev. 13:8. The LAMB SLAIN [not, 'obedient'] from the foundation of the world.

Our predestination to glorification is based on Jesus' predestination to glorification. Our physical bodies will one day share in the glory his physical body already has.

1 Jn. 3:2. When he will appear, we will be like him; for we will see him as he is [present tense].

Rev. 1:12-16. I saw ... his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet ... as if they burned in a furnace, ... and his face was as the sun shining in its strength.

GC Diagram Pg [39](#), [LINK 1](#). FOREKNOWLEDGE (F)

Foreknowledge is the passive part of election, while predestination is the active forward-looking part of election. Predestination must work together with foreknowledge in order to foresee every potential outcome in order for God's predestination to be effective.

Reformed theologians try to change the meaning of the word foreknowledge to mean 'foreknowledge plus determination,' or 'foreknowledge and predestination,' to avoid the biblical teaching that God chooses whom to predestine based on whom he foreknows in Messiah.

But 'foreknowledge' [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis] and 'predestination', [προορίζω, pro-oridzo] are two different words with two different meanings. If foreknowledge was determinate, like predestination is, the word 'determinate' would not have to have been added in Acts 2:23, "delivered by the determinate [ορίζω, oridzo] counsel [βουλή] and foreknowledge [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis] of God."

Foreknowledge doesn't cause anything. Peter gave the churches foreknowledge that false teachers would arise, but that didn't cause them to arise. Also, the Jews knew Paul's background, but they didn't cause it.

2 Pet. 3:3-4, 17. Knowing this first, that there will come in the last days scoffers ... saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' ... Seeing you know these things before [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis], beware.

Acts 26:4-5. My manner of life from my youth ... all the Jews know; which [fore]knew [πρόγνωσις, prognosis] me from the beginning.

UF. Union to Foreknowledge

The following verses show we were chosen by foreknowledge in Messiah, not by God's arbitrary choice or non-biblical 'secret decree,' as Calvinism has invented.

Rom. 16:13 Salute Rufus, chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos] in [not, 'to be in'] the Lord.

Eph. 1:4-11. He has chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklegomai] us in [not, 'to be in him'] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy [sanctification], ... in the beloved, ... in whom also we have obtained an inheritance [glorification], being predestinated [προορίζω, pro-oridzo].

1 Pet. 1:2. Elect [εκλεκτός, eklektos] according to the foreknowledge [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis] of God.

Rev. 13:8; 17:8. Whose names are not [foreknown and thus not] written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ... Whose names were not [foreknown and thus not] written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.

Reformed theologians say God couldn't have chosen who to predestinate based on whom he foreknew would believe because the Greek word for foreknowledge [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis] implies an intimate, personal knowledge of someone; not merely knowing they would do something in the future, like believe.

The Bible does say God foreknew who would believe and who wouldn't.

Jn. 6:64. Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not.

But Calvinists are correct the Bible doesn't say that's how God decided who to predestine. He chose those whom he intimately

foreknew in the eternal Son. It's impossible the eternal God didn't intimately know from eternity past each person who would become joined as one to the Son, and through the Son to himself. So, he didn't need to wait for someone to believe and be justified and joined into union with his Son to begin providentially controlling all the circumstances and details necessary to ensure their birth, preservation through the dangers of life, hearing of the gospel, and safe arrival in glorification (but not their faith).

Messiah is the beloved. We were chosen "in him" (Eph. 1:4), not "to be in him;" and "in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6), not "to be in the beloved."

Rom. 16:13. Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord [not "to be in the Lord].

Rom. 1:1-7. Beloved of God [in Messiah, the basis of calling], called to be saints.

Eph. 1:4-11 He has chosen [ἐκλέγομαι, eklegomai] us in him,... in the beloved,... in whom.

Forster (Non-Calvinist):

The Bible does not say that we are chosen to be put into Messiah, but that we were chosen in Messiah. Our election is not separate from his election. The meaning of Messiah's election was certainly not that he should repent [or believe, or choose to obey]." 35

[35 Forster, God's Strategy, Volume 2, Kindle 3269.]

Pinnock (Non-Calvinist):

The elect are chosen in [ἐν] Messiah, ... they are not chosen into [εἰς] Messiah."35

[35 Pinnock, Grace for All, Kindle 2227-2229.]

FP. Foreknowledge to Predestination

It's an inconvenient truth for Reformed theologians, that the Bible says God chose to predestine those whom he foreknew.

Lu. 10:20. Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Rev. 20:12, 15. Another book was opened, which is the book of life And whoever[‘s name] was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Rom. 8:29. Whom he foreknew [προγινώσκω, proginosko], he also PREDESTINED [προορίζω, pro- oridzo].

Phil. 4:3 My fellow laborers, whose names are [foreknown and thus written] in the book of life.

Foreknowledge and predestination must act together to enable God to use the free wills of men and other created beings within his plans, and to actively interfere with the course of history only to the extent required to accomplish his plans. A great example is the book of Esther, that turned on such a small thing as a night of ‘royal indigestion,’ as Arnold Fruchtenbaum says.

Esth. 6:1. On that night, the king could not sleep.

Godet (Non-Calvinist):

As to the speculative question of the relation between God's eternal plan and the freedom of human determinations, it seems to me probable that Paul ... puts us on this way, Rom 8:29-30, by making foreknowledge the basis of predestination. As a general, who is in full acquaintance with the plans of campaign adopted by the opposing general, would organize his own in keeping with this certain prevision, and would find means of turning all the marches and countermarches of his adversary to the success of his designs; so God, after fixing the supreme end, employs the free human actions, which He contemplates from the depths of His eternity, as factors to which He assigns a part, and which He makes so many means in the realization of His eternal design.⁴⁷

[Godet, Romans, Kindle 1040-10410.]

God told Paul to persevere in preaching the gospel in Corinth because he foreknew many there in Messiah from before the foundation of the earth.

Acts 18:10. For I have much people in this city.

The Psalmist said ...

Ps. 139:13-16. You have covered me in my mother's womb. ... I am fearfully and wonderfully made. ... My substance was not hid from you, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, yet being unperfect; and in your book, all my members were written . when as yet there was none of them.

The people God foreknew in Romans 8 are ...

Rom. 8:1, 28-29. Them who are in Messiah, ... the called, ... whom he foreknew.

In Romans 6-8 Paul says our justification is accomplished by our union into Messiah at the point of his death, so that our sanctification and glorification are ensured. And God's predestinating decrees concerning those in union with Messiah, also ensure our sanctification and glorification.

Rom. 6:3-4; 8:11. As many of us as were baptized [spiritually, 1 Cor. 12:13] into Jesus Messiah were baptized into his death [union], ... so that like as Messiah was raised up from the dead, ... even so we also would walk in newness of life [sanctification] ... [And] he that raised up Messiah from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies [glorification] ... Them that love God [sanctification], ... are the called according to his purpose. Because whom he did foreknow [in union with the Son], he also did predestine to be conformed to the image of his Son [glorification].

GC Diagram Pg [39](#), LINK 2. PREDESTINATION (P)

Many philosophers, Christian and otherwise, claim that if God foreknows the future, he causes it; because if he knows it, it can't happen any other way. But if I know what the stock market will do tomorrow; via time machine, crystal ball, angelic revelation, or something; my foreknowing it doesn't cause it, because even if I don't know it, it will still occur because it's the future. The future is

merely definitional as ‘what will happen,’ whether anyone, even God, knows it will happen or not.

Predestination, on the other hand, determines the future. God predestined every person he foreknew in Messiah to glorification, sanctification, etc., by writing their names ...

Rev. 17:8. In the book of life from the foundation of the world.

Meyer:

Suppose that a geologist, amid his explorations of the traces of earth's earliest life, were suddenly to come across a slab inscribed with his own name and a prediction of the precise date of his coming. With what amazement would he scan that mysterious tablet.⁴⁸

[Meyer, Gospel of John, Kindle 1693-1695.]

PG. Predestination to Glorification, Not to Faith

The following verses teach predestination and ordination to glorification, not to faith. The main Greek word for predestination is *προορίζω* (pro-oridzo); but *τάσσω* (tasso), *προετοιμάζω* (proetoimadzo), and *τίθημι* (tithymi)

are sometimes used similarly.

Jn. 6:39. This is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he has given [δίδωμι, didomi] me I would LOSE NOTHING [glorification, not faith], but would RAISE IT UP again at the last day [glorification, not faith].

Jn. 17:2-3. You have given [the Son] power over all flesh, so that he would give eternal life [glorification, not faith] to as many as you have given him [predestination].

Acts 13:48 As many as were ordained [τάσσω, tasso] TO ETERNAL LIFE [to glorification, not to faith], believed. [See "Comments on Select Verses."]

Rom. 8:29. Whom he foreknew [προγινώσκω, proginosko], he also predestined [προορίζω, pro- oridzo] to be CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON [to glorification, not to faith].

Rom. 9:23-24. So that he could make known THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY [glorification, not faith] on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared [προετοιμάζω, pro-etoidadzo] to GLORY [to glorification, not to faith], even us, whom he has called [καλέω, kaleo].

1 Cor. 2:7. We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, ... which God ordained [προορίζω, pro-oridzo] before the world TO OUR GLORY [glorification, not faith], which none of the princes of this world knew, ... [or] they would not have crucified the Lord of GLORY.

Eph. 1:5. Having predestined [προορίζω, pro-oridzo] us TO THE SONSHIP [υιοθεσία, uiothesia, "the sonship, that is, the redemption of our body," Rom. 8:23, i.e. glorification, not faith].

Eph. 1:11-12. In whom also we have obtained an INHERITANCE [glorification, not faith], being predestined [προορίζω, pro-oridzo] according to the purpose [πρόθεσις, prothesis] of him who works all things after the counsel [βουλή, bouly] of his own will [θέλημα, thelyma], that we should be to THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY [glorification, not faith].

1 Thess. 5:8-10. Putting on ... for a helmet THE HOPE OF [future] SALVATION [glorification, not faith]. God has ... appointed [τίθημι, tithymi] us ... TO OBTAIN [future] SALVATION [glorification, not faith], ... whether we wake or sleep, . together with him.

Ps. Predestination to Sanctification, Not to Faith

The following verses teach predestination to sanctification and service, not to faith.

Jn. 15:16. You have not chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklegomai] me, but I have chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklegomai] you, and ordained [τίθημι, tithymi] you, that you would go and BRING FORTH FRUIT [sanctification and service, not faith].

1 Cor. 12:18-28. God set [εθετο (τίθημι)] ... in the body, as it has pleased him. . God has set [τίθημι, tithymi] some in the church, first APOSTLES, secondarily PROPHETS, thirdly TEACHERS [sanctification and service, not faith].

Eph. 2:10. Created in Messiah Jesus to GOOD WORKS [sanctification and service, not faith], which God has before ordained [προετοιμάζω, pro-etoiomadzo] that we would WALK IN THEM [sanctification and service, not faith].

PS. Predestination to Salvation, Not to Faith

The following verses teach predestination, and the Father's giving, to union with, and thus salvation in, Jesus, not to faith.

Jn. 17:2-3. You have given him power over all flesh, that he should give ETERNAL LIFE [not faith] to as many as you have given him. And this is LIFE ETERNAL, that they would KNOW YOU the only true God, and JESUS MESSIAH [union in Messiah, not faith], whom you have sent.

Jn. 6:37a. All that the Father gives me will COME TO ME [union in Messiah, not faith].

Jn. 6:65. No man can COME TO ME [union in Messiah, not faith], unless it was given to him of my Father.

PC. Predestination to Calling

The following verses teach predestination to calling, not to faith.

Rom. 8:30a. Moreover, whom he predestined [προορίζω, pro-oridzo], them he also CALLED [καλέω, kaleo] [to sanctification and glorification, not to faith, per the verses below].

GC Diagram PG 39, Election (E)

Election includes both passive foreknowledge and active predestination. It's not primarily the choosing of a person, as much as a choosing them TO something.

Election comes after union.

Eph. 1:4. He has chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklegomai] us in him [union] before the foundation of the world.

Rom. 16:13. Rufus chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos] in the Lord [union].

Election includes foreknowledge and predestination.

Jn. 15:16. I have chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklogomai, elected] you, AND [pre]ordained [τίθημι, tithimi, used as a synonym for predestined] you, that you would go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit [3] will remain [μένω, meno] [glorification].

Eph. 1:4-5. According as he has chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklegomai, elected] us in him before the foundation of the world, so that we would be holy and without blame before him in love [sanctification]; having predestined [προορίζω, pro-oridzo, predestined] us to the sonship [υιοθεσία, uiorthesia, including future glorification per Rom. 8:23] by Jesus Messiah to himself.

Foreknowledge is God's choosing/election of Who; predestination is God's choosing/election of To. Foreknowledge determined whom God wrote in the Lamb's book of life; writing their names in the book of life is how God personally predestined them by speaking their future sanctification and glorification into existence. (Their justification also, but not their faith, which can be confusing to people without careful explanation.)

Election comes before calling.

1 Cor. 1:26-27. You see your [2] calling [κλησις, klysis], brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, ... [are called]; but God has [1] chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklegomai, elected] the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

Election and calling comprise the whole of God's decree to ensure our complete salvation.

1 Pet. 1:10. Make your calling [κλησις, klysis] and election [εκλογή, eklogy] sure.

Election is not listed as one of the five links in the golden chain, because it is comprised of foreknowledge and predestination, which are listed.

Election uses foreknowledge to choose.

1 Pet. 1:2. Elect [εκλεκτός, eklektos] ... according to foreknowledge [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis].

Rom. 9:11-12. The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election [εκλογή, eklogy] might stand, not of works, but of him that calls, it was said to her, "The elder shall serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

God didn't choose Jacob over Esau because Jacob deserved to inherit the covenants because of his good deeds. But God wouldn't have chosen, predestined, and called Jacob unless he knew Jacob would be 1) a child of Isaac, and 2) a believer, and not a "profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright" (Heb. 12:16). Being a child of Isaac and a believer didn't make Jacob merit such a high and gracious calling as to be the father of the nation of Israel. Also, God, in his providence, would have arranged the birthplace, time, and parents of people so at least one of Isaac's sons would have been a believer, without causing anyone to be a believer.

We are [3] called, because we were [2] chosen (elect), because we are foreknown through our union in Messiah which we entered through justification by [1] faith.

Rev. 17:14. They that are with [the Lamb] are [3] called [κλητός, klytos], and [2] chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos], and [1] faithful [πιστός, pistos].

EG. Election to Glorification, Not to Faith

The following verses teach election and choosing to glorification, not to faith. The same Greek words are translated as ‘election’ and ‘choosing’ in the KJV.

KJV TRANSLATES SAME GREEK WORDS ELECTION & CHOOSING			
Type	Greek	KJV Election	KJV Choosing
Adjective	ἐκλεκτός eklektos	17	6
Verb	ἐκλέγομαι eklegomai	0	22
Noun	ἐκλογή eklogy	6	1

Rom. 11:5, 7, 15. There is a remnant according to the election [εκλογή, eklogy] of grace. ... The election [εκλογή, eklogy] has obtained it [salvation, not faith], ... LIFE FROM THE DEAD [future glorification, not faith].

2 Tim. 2:10. I endure all things for the elect's [εκλεκτός, eklektos] sakes, so that they may also obtain the [future] SALVATION [not faith], ... ETERNAL GLORY [glorification, not faith].

Titus 1:1-3. According to the faith [justification] of God's elect [εκλεκτός, eklektos], and ... godliness [sanctification]; in hope of [future] ETERNAL LIFE [glorification, not faith], which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. [See “Comments on Select Verses.”]

James 2:5. Hasn't God chosen [ἐκλέγομαι, eklegomai] the poor of this world rich in faith [easier for the poor to believe], and HEIRS OF THE KINGDOM [glorification, not faith] which he has promised? [See “Comments on Select Verses.”]

1 Pet. 1:2-7. Elect [εκλεκτός, eklektos] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, ... TO AN INHERITANCE [glorification, not faith] . reserved in heaven for you, . to [future] SALVATION [not faith] ready to be revealed in the last time, . found unto .

GLORY at the appearing of Jesus Messiah.

Rev. 17:14. They that are WITH HIM [the Lamb in future glorification, not faith] are called [κλητός, klytos], and chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos].

Rev. 21:27. There will in no wise ENTER INTO IT [glorification, not faith] any thing that defiles, ... but they which are [elected by having been] written in the Lamb's book of life.

Es. Election to Sanctification, Not to Faith

The following verses teach election, choosing, and willing to sanctification and service, not to faith.

Eph. 1:1. Paul, an APOSTLE OF JESUS MESSIAH [sanctification, not faith] by the will [θέλημα, thelyma] of God. (Also, 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1.)

1 Cor. 12:1, 9-11. Concerning SPIRITUAL GIFTS [sanctification, not faith], ... the ... Spirit dividing to every man severally as he will [βούλομαι].

Jam. 1:18-19. Of his own will [βούλομαι, boulomai] he begat us ... so that we should be a kind of FIRSTFRUITS of his creatures. Wherefore, . let every man be SWIFT TO HEAR, SLOW TO SPEAK, SLOW TO WRATH [sanctification, not faith].

1 Pet. 1:2. Elect [εκλεκτός, eklektos] according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto OBEDIENCE [sanctification, not faith] and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Messiah; GRACE to you.

1 Pet. 2:9. You are a chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos] generation, ... so that you would SHOW FORTH THE PRAISES [sanctification, not faith] of him who has

called [καλέω, kaleo] you out of darkness INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT [sanctification, “Walk in the light,” 1 Jn. 1:7].

ES. Election to Salvation, Not to Faith

The following verses teach election to salvation, justification, and union in Messiah, not to faith.

1 Thess. 1:3-4. Your work of faith [evidence of justification], and labor of love [sanctification], and patience of hope [glorification] [i.e. all of salvation, not saving faith] in our Lord Jesus Messiah, ... [thus] knowing, brethren beloved, your election [εκλογή, eklogy] of God. [See “Comments on Select Verses.”]

2 Thess. 2:13. God has from the beginning chosen [αίρέω, aipeo] you TO SALVATION [justification, sanctification, and glorification; not to faith]. [See “Comments on Select Verses.”]

1 Pet. 1:2. Elect [εκλεκτός, eklektos] according to the foreknowledge [πρόγνωσις, pro-gnosis] of God the Father, to OBEDIENCE [sanctification, not faith] and SPRINKLING OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS [justification, not faith].

GC Diagram Pg [39](#), LINK [3](#). CALLING (C)

Election to glorification, sanctification, and salvation is not accomplished by some ‘secret work’ of God, but by his word, just like his creation of the world, and his calling of Isaac for service.

Gen. 1:3. God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.

Rom. 9:11-12. So that the purpose of God according to election would stand, ... it was said to her [Rebekah], “The elder [Esau] will serve the younger [Jacob].”

By saying, “Whoever believes in him [will] not perish, but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16), God makes it so. And by writing our names “in the book of life from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 17:8), he guarantees and accomplishes our personal future glorification.

CG. Calling to Glorification, Not to Faith

The following verses teach calling to glorification, not to faith. The main Greek words for calling are the noun κλησις [klysis], the adjective κλητός [klytos], and the verb 'καλέω' [kaleo]. 'τάσσω' (tasso) is sometimes used similarly.

Jn. 6:37b. Him that comes to me I will IN NO WISE CAST OUT [glorification, not faith].

Jn. 6:44. No man can come to me, unless the Father which has sent me draw [ελκύω, elkuo] him; and I will RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY [glorification, not faith].

Rom. 8:28-30. Called [κλητός, klytos] ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE [πρόθεσις, prothesis, our glorification, not faith]. ... Whom he called [κλητός, klytos], ... them he also GLORIFIED [glorification, not faith].

Rom. 9:23-24. So that he could make known THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared [προετοιμάζω, pro- etoimadzo] TO GLORY [glorification, not faith], even us, whom he has called [καλέω, kaleo].

Eph. 1:18-20. That you may know what is THE HOPE [future] of his calling [κλησις, klysis], ... the GLORY OF HIS INHERITANCE [glorification, not faith], ... his power . in Messiah when he RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD.

Eph. 4:4. Called [ἐκλήθητε] in ONE HOPE [future glorification, not faith] of your calling [κλησις, klysis].

1 Thess. 2:12. Walk worthy of God who has called [καλέω. kaleo] you to HIS KINGDOM AND GLORY [glorification, not faith].

1 Thess. 5:23-24. Preserved blameless to THE COMING OF THE LORD [glorification, not faith]. ... Faithful is he that calls [καλέω, kaleo] you, who also will do it.

2 Thess. 1:5-12. Worthy of THE KINGDOM OF GOD . when he will come to be GLORIFIED in his saints. ... Worthy of this calling [κλησις, klysis], ... our Lord ... GLORIFIED in you, and you in him [glorification, not faith].

2 Thess. 2:14. He called [καλέω, kaleo] you by our gospel, to the OBTAINING OF THE GLORY of our Lord [glorification, not faith].

1 Tim. 6:12-19. Lay hold on ETERNAL LIFE [glorification, not faith] to which you are also called [καλέω, kaleo] ... until the APPEARING OF OUR LORD, which in his times he will show ... Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on [future] ETERNAL LIFE [glorification, not faith].

2 Tim. 1:9-10. Called [καλέω, kaleo] us with a holy calling [κλησις, klysis], ... according to his own purpose [πρόθεσις, prothesis] and grace which was given us in Messiah Jesus before the world began, . who has abolished death and has brought LIFE AND IMMORTALITY [glorification, not faith] to light.

Heb. 3:1. Holy brethren, partakers of the HEAVENLY [glorification, not faith] calling [κλησις, klysis].

Heb. 9:15-16. He is the mediator of the new testament, so that ... they which are called [καλέω, kaleo] would receive the promise of ETERNAL INHERITANCE [glorification, not faith].

Heb. 11:8. He was called [καλέω, kaleo] TO ... AN INHERITANCE [glorification, not faith].

1 Pet. 5:10. The God of all grace, who has called [καλέω, kaleo] us to HIS ETERNAL GLORY [glorification, not faith] by Messiah.

2 Pet. 1:3, 10-11. Through the knowledge of him that has called [καλέω, kaleo] us to GLORY [glorification, not faith] and virtue [sanctification, not faith]. . Make your calling [κλησις, klysis] and election [εκλογή, eklogy] sure, . for so an entrance will be ministered to you abundantly INTO THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM [glorification, not faith].

Jude 1:1. Sanctified [sanctification, not faith] ... and PRESERVED [glorification, not faith] in Jesus Messiah, and called [κλητός, klytos].

Rev. 17:14. They that are WITH HIM [glorification, not faith] are called [κλητός, klytos], and chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos], and faithful.

Rev. 19:9. Blessed are they which are called [καλέω, kaleo] to the [future] MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB [glorification, not faith].

Cs. Calling to Sanctification, Not to Faith

The following verses teach calling to sanctification and service, not to faith.

Acts 2:38-39. You will receive the GIFT OF THE [indwelling] HOLY GHOST [sanctification, not faith]. For the promise is to ... as many as the Lord our God will call (to himself) [προσκαλέω, pros-kaleo].

Rom. 1:6-7. Among whom are you also the called [κλητός, klytos] of Jesus Messiah; . beloved of God, called [κλητός, klytos] to be SAINTS [sanctification, not faith].

1 Cor. 1:2. To them that are SANCTIFIED in Messiah, ... called [κλητός] to be SAINTS [sanctification, not faith].

1 Cor. 7:15. God has called [καλέω, kaleo] us to PEACE [sanctification, not faith].

1 Cor. 7:18-24. Is any man called [καλέω, kaleo] being circumcised? ... Called [καλέω, kaleo] in uncircumcision? ... Abide in the same calling [κλησις, klysis] wherein he was called [καλέω, kaleo]. ... Called [καλέω, kaleo] ... being a servant? ... He that is called [καλέω, kaleo] in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called [καλέω, kaleo], being free, IS MESSIAH'S SERVANT [sanctification, not faith]. You are bought with a price; DON'T BE THE SERVANTS OF MEN. Brethren, let every man wherein he is called [κλησις, klysis] therein abide.

Gal. 1:6. Called [καλέω, kaleo] you into the GRACE of Messiah [sanctification, not faith, Rom. 5:2, "this grace in which we stand."]]

Gal. 1:15-16. Separated [ἀφορίζω, aphoridzo] me ... and called [καλέω, kaleo] me by his grace ... so that I WOULD PREACH [sanctification and service, not faith] him among the heathen. (Also regarding being called to service: Acts 1:2, 16:10; Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:1, 4:9; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11; Heb. 5:4, 5:10, 7:11.)

Gal. 5:8, 13. This persuasion doesn't come of him that calls [καλέω, kaleo] you. ... You have been called [καλέω, kaleo] to LIBERTY [sanctification, not faith]; only don't use liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but BY LOVE SERVE ONE ANOTHER [sanctification, not faith].

Eph. 4:1-2. WALK WORTHY of the calling [κλησις, klysis] wherewith you are called [καλέω, kaleo], with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another IN LOVE [sanctification, not faith].

Phil. 3:14-15. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling [κλησις, klysis] of God in Messiah. ... As many as BE PERFECT [sanctification, not faith], be thus minded.

Col. 3:14-15. Put on CHARITY, which is the bond of perfectness, and let the PEACE OF GOD rule in your hearts [sanctification, not faith], TO THE WHICH also you are called [καλέω, kaleo].

1 Thess. 4:7. God has not called [καλέω, kaleo] us to uncleanness, but to HOLINESS [sanctification, not faith].

1 Pet. 1:15. As he which has called [καλέω, kaleo] you is holy, so be you HOLY IN ALL MANNER OF CONVERSATION [sanctification, not faith].

1 Pet. 2:9. You are a chosen [εκλεκτός, eklektos] generation, ... so that you would SHOW FORTH THE PRAISES of him who has called [καλέω, kaleo] you out of darkness INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT [sanctification, not faith, "Walk in the light," 1 Jn. 1:7].

1 Pet. 3:8-9. LOVE [sanctification, not faith], ... knowing that to THIS you are called [καλέω, kaleo].

It wasn't only Jesus that was predestined to his service of providing salvation, but Judas and some false teachers were also ordained to their evil services, but not to unbelief.

John 6:70-71. "Haven't I chosen [εκλέγο, eklego] you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon, for it was HE THAT WOULD BETRAY him [lack of sanctification, not unbelief], being one of the twelve.

Jude 1:4. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained [προγράφω, prographo] to THIS CONDEMNATION [lack of sanctification, not unbelief], ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into LASCIVIOUSNESS, and DENYING the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Messiah.

CS. Calling to Salvation, Not to Faith

The following verses teach calling to salvation, justification, and union in Messiah, not to faith.

Rom. 8:30b. Them who are the called [κλητός, klytos] according to his purpose; ... whom he called [καλέω, kaleo], them he also JUSTIFIED [including simultaneous union in Messiah, not faith].

1 Cor. 1:9, 23-30. Called [καλέω, kaleo] TO THE UNION [κοινωνία, koinonia] OF HIS SON [not to faith] We preach Messiah crucified; to the Jews a stumblingblock, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them which are called [κλητός, klytos], ... MESSIAH the power of God. ... You see your calling [κλησις], brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called [added by translators]. But God has chosen [εκλέγομαι, eklegomai] the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, . that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are you IN MESSIAH JESUS, who of God is MADE TO US wisdom, and RIGHTEOUSNESS [i.e. justification], and SANCTIFICATION, and REDEMPTION [i.e. glorification, Rom. 8:23] [not faith]. [See “Comments on Select Verses.”]

The following verses teach drawing to come to Jesus, not to faith.

John 6:44. No man can COME TO ME, unless the Father which has sent me draw [ελκύω, elkuo] him [to myself, not to faith]; and I will raise him up at the last day [resurrection and glorification].

GC Diagram Pg [39](#), LINK 4. JUSTIFICATION (J)

Justification is a legal concept meaning ‘to be declared righteous,’ in contrast to condemnation meaning ‘to be declared guilty.’ In opposition to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, the Bible teaches the saved are not righteous in their works, but judicially

“counted” as being righteous. It’s not unjust of the perfectly righteous judge of the universe to count an unrighteous man as righteous, because of the substitutionary sacrifice of Messiah for sinners, so long as the sinner accepts and depends upon his sacrifice by faith.

Rom. 3:23-26. All have sinned, ... being justified [what?!]... through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, ... through faith in his blood, to declare [God’s] righteousness for the remission of sins, ... that he might be just, and the justifier, of him which believes in Jesus.

Gen. 15:6. [Abraham] believed in the Lord; and [the Lord] counted it to him for righteousness.

Rom. 4:3, Gal. 3:5, Jam. 2:23. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.

Rom. 4:6. David also describes the blessedness of the man, to whom God imputes [counts, reckons] righteousness without works.

JG. Justification to Glorification

Rom. 8:30c. Whom he justified, them he also GLORIFIED.

Jn. 6:40. This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believes on him, will have everlasting life [justification and regeneration]; and I will RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY [glorification].

Jn. 6:54. Whoever eats my flesh, and drinks my blood [faith], has [receives] eternal life [justification and regeneration]; and I will RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY [glorification].

Titus 3:7. So that being justified by his grace, we would be made HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

Rom. 5:1-2. Being justified by faith, we ... rejoice in hope of THE GLORY OF GOD.

In the Golden Chain diagram, all the arrows, except those pointing to sanctification, end up pointing to glorification, which emphasizes

its certainty, and confirms it's God's ultimate purpose of our salvation.

GC Diagram Pg 39, LINK 5. GLORIFICATION (G)

Our hope of future glorification is not some minor doctrine, but comprises one third of the three parts of our salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification. And our hope of glorification is not one of several hopes for the Christian, it is THE hope.

Col. 1:27. Messiah in you, the hope of glory.

Titus 2:13. That blessed hope and the glorious appearing of ... Messiah.

Justification results in glorification without fail, because of the way we were justified, by putting us into Messiah. Therefore, we will share in the glory he already has.

1 Jn. 3:2. When he will appear [in the future], we will be like him; for we will see him as he is [now].

Col. 3:4. When Messiah, who is our life, will appear, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Our hope of glorification isn't a 'hope' in the sense of having any uncertainty, as in 'I hope so.' It's called a hope, even though it's certain, because it's future.

Rom. 8:24. We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for?

We have faith in the past certainty of Messiah's substitutionary death, and we have a sure hope in the future certainty of our glorification.

Yet most believers [and most Bible teachers] probably don't even know what glorification is. In Webster's 1828 dictionary, 'glory' means "1. Brightness; luster; splendor." 37 [Webster's Dictionary 1828 Online.] Paul was physically blinded by the brightness of the risen and glorified Yeshua.

Acts 22:6-11. As I ... came near to Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light,... and he said to me, "I am Jesus of Nazareth." ... And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

That is what Jesus looked like when Paul saw him after he was resurrected and glorified, and that is how John saw him when he wrote Revelation, and how he still looks now.

Rev. 1:14-16. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, ... and his face was as the sun shining in full strength.

And that is what we will look like someday.

2 Thess. 2:8-14. The Lord will ... destroy [the Wicked one] with the brightness of his coming, ..but ... God has ... called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of ... Messiah.

But we will not all shine with the same brightness.

1 Cor. 15:41. There is one glory [brightness] of the sun, and another glory [brightness] of the moon, and another glory [brightness] of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory [brightness].

Some will shine brighter than others because they suffered more.

2 Cor. 4:17. Our light affliction [compared to the weight of glory], which is but for a moment [compared to eternity], produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

And some will shine brighter because they shared the gospel more.

Dan. 12:2-3. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that are wise will shine as the brightness of heaven; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

What good is shining? Because we won't need money or such things in the kingdom. Stars not only shine to different degrees of

brightness, but also in different colors. Just by looking at someone, you'll know what their life was like; how much purity, how much perseverance in suffering, how much sacrificial love, etc. And we'll have that appearance for all eternity.

GC Diagram Pg 39. The Gospel (g)

g1. Gospel Based on Redemption

The gospel is the message of what Jesus did to save us: his death, burial, and resurrection.

1 Cor. 15:1-4. I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which you also have received, ... by which also you are saved, ... that Messiah died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

Our faith must be in the redemption Jesus provided as proclaimed in the word of the gospel, and the resulting justification is based on Jesus' work of providing redemption.

Rom. 3:23-25. All have sinned, ... being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, ... through faith in his blood.

God provided everything for our salvation. That's why it's not "works" to believe the gospel. Instead, it's to forsake one's own works and self-righteousness, and to believe and trust in God's provision and work. Salvation is all of God and of all grace, because God alone provided it through the death and resurrection of Messiah.

If God had not made provision for redemption in Messiah, all the faith in the world could accomplish nothing. Faith is mere acceptance of God's provision; the glory is to the provider. It doesn't detract from the glory of a rich giver for a pauper to genuinely accept his gift without having to be caused to accept it.

Rom. 5:6-8. Messiah died for the ungodly. ... While we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us.

g2. Faith Enabled by the Gospel

The following verses show the gospel enables faith, even in spiritually dead people.

Rom. 1:16. The gospel ... is the POWER OF GOD TO SALVATION to everyone that believes.

Rom. 10:17 FAITH comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Rom. 16:25-26. Now to him that is of POWER TO ESTABLISH YOU according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Messiah, ... now ... made known to all nations FOR THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH.

Eph. 16:25-26. The SWORD OF THE SPIRIT ... is the word of God.

Calvinists are correct that spiritually dead men can't understand spiritual things, or do godly works. But they are incorrect that physical death is a good picture of spiritual death, or that spiritually dead men can't believe the gospel. The gospel miraculously empowers a person so he can make the most genuine decision of his life.

John repeatedly says unregenerate men can't do certain things, like give themselves new birth, or come to the light, or accept Jesus' teachings. But John also repeatedly says the one thing unregenerate men can do is believe the gospel, which is why he wrote his gospel.

Jn. 20:30. These are written, so that ... believing, you may have life.

But the Calvinist Version of the verse goes ...

Jn. 20:30 (CV). These are written, so that having life, you may believe.

Believing the gospel is a synergistic work. Not everyone who hears, believes.

Acts 28:24. Some believed, ... some didn't believe.

Reformed theologians are correct that men are corrupt in body, soul, and spirit.

Rom. 1:24-28. God ... gave them up ... to dishonor their own bodies [body]; ... God gave them up to vile affections [soul], ... God gave them over to a reprobate mind [spirit].

But it's unbiblical and disparaging to the power of the gospel to say total depravity makes it impossible for men to believe the gospel. Satan was able to sin in contradiction to his original sinless nature, and the gospel enables men to believe in contradiction to their inherited sinful natures.

One of the last and most important things God said to us in the New Testament is ...

Rev. 22:17. Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

And he didn't add any Calvinistic limitations.

Rev. 22:18. If any man will add to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.

What a serious offence to teach that the salvation God provided at such unfathomable cost to himself so all can take of it "freely" (Rev. 22:17), is not the true representation of his heart, nor a genuine offer in the way people unindoctrinated into Calvinism would normally understand an offer.

Faith is enabled, but not caused, by the gospel, as the following verses show.

Acts 28:24. Some believed the things which were spoken, and some BELIEVED NOT.

Heb. 4:2. To us was the gospel preached, as well as to them, but the word preached did not profit them, NOT BEING MIXED WITH FAITH in them that heard it.

If the gospel 'caused' faith, all who heard the gospel would believe. Calvinists claim it's a 'secret calling,' not the gospel, that causes faith. But as shown in the rest of this section, we are elected,

predestinated, and called to sanctification and glorification, not to faith. The chain of causation from predestination to glorification doesn't include faith. Faith, enabled by the power of hearing the gospel, is a true point of free will, where the chain of causation becomes a point of new creation of a truly free choice. By creating wills, God shared his ability to create with his creatures.

GC Diagram Pg 39, Time (T)

T1. Faith

The main point of this section of the book about the Golden Chain of Romans 8 is that faith is not predestined in any way; not elected, predestined, given, or called. Thus, there are no lines or arrows going from foreknowledge, election, predestination, or calling, to faith in the GC diagram. Biblically, faith is not a node on some sequence of caused events. Faith is not caused, though it is enabled.

Biblically, Faith vs. Works, not Faith is a Work

The Bible never contrasts faith vs. grace, as Calvinists do. Reformed theologians claim that if men could be justified by ungifted faith, that would make faith a work, and put it in opposition to grace. But the Bible doesn't have that problem with faith. The Bible consistently contrasts faith and works without ever bothering to claim it's only because faith is supposedly gifted that it's not a work.

The Bible consistently contrasts the system of law, where just rewards are earned by works; and the system of grace, where the gifts of God are received through faith. It never says the gifts of God, like the gift of eternal life through justification by faith, are received by a preliminary gift of faith. It doesn't describe three systems that we move through in steps: works of law, faith by grace, and then salvation by faith. That's unscriptural.

LAW/WORKS VS. GRACE/FAITH, NOT FAITH VS. GRACE - RM 2:6				
Rom	Law/Judgment		Promise/ Grace	
	Works	Wages	Faith	Gift
2:6	his <u>deeds</u> .	Who will <u>render</u> to every man		

		according ...		
2:7	To them who ... by <u>patient continuance in well doing</u> seek for immortality ... [Messiah alone accomplished this]	<u>eternal life.</u>		
2:8	But to them that ... <u>obey unrighteousness</u> ...	<u>indignation</u> and <u>wrath, tribulation</u> and <u>anguish.</u>		

LAW/WORKS VS. GRACE/FAITH, NOT FAITH VS. GRACE - RM 3:20				
Rom	Law/Judgment		Promise/Grace	
	Works	Wages	Faith	Gift
3:20 -22	By the <u>deeds</u> of the law ...	there shall <u>no flesh be justified.</u>	by <u>faith.</u>	But now the <u>righteousness of God</u> without the law is manifested, even the <u>righteousness of God</u> which is ...

LAW/WORKS VS. GRACE/FAITH, NOT FAITH VS. GRACE - RM 4:4				
Rom	Law/Judgment		Promise/Grace	
	Works	Wages	Faith	Gift
4:45	To him that <u>works</u> ...	is the <u>reward</u> <u>reckoned</u> not of grace, but of debt.	But to him that <u>works not</u> , but <u>believes</u> , his <u>faith</u> ...	is counted for <u>righteousness</u>
4:13 -16	for where ... law is there is ... <u>transgression.</u>	The law works <u>wrath</u> , ...	but through ... <u>faith.</u> Therefore it is of <u>faith</u> , so that it may be by grace.	The promise that he would be the <u>heir of the world</u> was not ... through the law ...

LAW/WORKS VS. GRACE/FAITH, NOT FAITH VS. GRACE - RM 5:18				
Rom	Law/Judgment		Promise/Grace	
	Works	Wages	Faith	Gift
5:18	As by the <u>offence</u> of one ...	judgment came on all men to <u>condemnation.</u>		even so by ... one, the free gift came on all men to <u>justification of life.</u>
5:19	That as <u>sin</u> has reigned ...	to <u>death</u>		even so might grace reign to <u>eternal life.</u>

LAW/WORKS VS. GRACE/FAITH, NOT FAITH VS. GRACE - RM 6:23				
Rom	Law/Judgment		Promise/Grace	
	Works	Wages	Faith	Gift
6:23	The wages of <u>sin</u>	is <u>death</u> ,		but the gift of God is <u>eternal life.</u>

LAW/WORKS VS. GRACE/FAITH, NOT FAITH VS. GRACE - EPH 2:8				
Eph	Law/Judgment		Promise/Grace	
	Works	Wages	FAITH	Gift
2:8-9			through faith. not of works.	By <u>grace</u> you are <u>saved</u> ... It is the gift of God, ...
NOT			not of works.	By <u>grace</u> you are <u>saved</u> ... through FAITH . It is the gift of God ...

In the table above, Calvinism puts faith for justification in the result column, instead of in the condition column, where the Bible always puts it.

LAW/WORKS VS. GRACE/FAITH, NOT FAITH VS. GRACE - GAL 3				
Gal	Law/Judgment		Promise/Grace	
	Works	Wages	Faith	Gift
3:2	by the <u>works</u> of the <u>law</u> , ...		or by the hearing of <u>faith</u> ?	Did you receive the Spirit ...
3:10	that continues not in all things ... in ... the law <u>to do them</u> .	Cursed is every one ...		
3:14			through <u>faith</u> .	So we can receive the <u>promise</u> of the <u>Spirit</u> ...

The Bible always contrasts grace and faith against law and works, never grace against faith, or against ungifted faith, like Calvinists do to maintain Calvin's theological system. It's not that in the 610 mentions of faith and believe in the New Testament, there are none that could possibly be interpreted to refer to gifted faith, if one is inclined to do so (Acts 18:27, Phil. 1:29, Heb. 12:2, 2 Pet. 1:1). Rather it's that none of the passages that deal with the doctrine of saving faith as a major part of the passage, bother to mention faith as a gift; which some would, if saving faith were really a gift. Faith after justification is definitely one of the gifts God gives every regenerate person.

Gal. 5:22. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

Rom. 4:4-5; 11:6. Now to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that works not, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. ... If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Calvinist Version. Now to him that [himself ungiftedly] is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that believes not [himself], but giftedly-believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his gifted-faith is counted for righteousness. ... If by grace, then it is no more of ungifted faith; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of ungifted faith, then it is no more of grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Reformed Theology says ungifted faith is something a man could boast about, but the Bible always associates boasting with works, never with faith, without having to say anything about it being gifted vs. ungifted faith.

Rom. 3:27-28; 4:2-3. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. ... If Abraham were justified by works, he has whereof to boast; but ... Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.

Calvinist Version. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works like our own faith? No, but by gifted faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by gifted faith without the deeds of the law. ... If Abraham were justified by his own faith, he has whereof to boast; but ... Abraham was given faith in God, and his gifted faith was counted to him for righteousness.

It's not possible to boast about even ungifted faith because the very definition of justifying faith is to trust in Messiah's righteousness instead of our own self-righteousness.

Luke 18:11-14. [Works and Boasting:] The Pharisee ... prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank you, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers.' ... [Faith and Humility] And the publican . would not lift up so much

as his eyes to heaven, but smote on his breast, saying, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ [Faith and Humility Results in Justification] I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.

Godet (Non-Calvinist):

How can faith be a merit, that which in its essence is precisely the renunciation of all merit?⁵⁰ [Godet, *Romans*, Kindle 10391-10392.]

A man who loses everything in the stock market can’t boast if someone takes him off the street, bathes, feeds, clothes, and gives him a million dollars, even if he himself has to accept the gift.

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

Is it not foolish to suggest that receiving a gift means that we deserve it? Calvinism denies the very distinction the Bible makes: “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Wages are earned, but a gift cannot be earned or merited; thus receiving a gift provides no cause for boasting.⁵¹

[Hunt, *What Love*, Kindle 12149-12152.]

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

The phrase “thy faith” is found eleven times in Scripture, while “your faith” is found twenty-four times. Individuals are given credit that the faith is their own. Never is there any indication that ... the faith was a gift from God as Calvinism insists it must be Christ said “thy faith hath made thee whole” to the woman who was healed by touching the hem of His garment (Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48), to the blind man outside Jericho (Mark 10:52), and to the Samaritan healed of leprosy (Luke 17:19). Christ said, “Thy faith hath saved thee,” to the sinful woman who washed His feet with her tears (Luke 7:50) and to the blind man outside Jericho (Luke 18:42). “Great is thy faith,” He said to the Canaanite woman who desired just a “crumb” of blessing (Matthew 15:28) Each of these statements is made to the unregenerate.³⁹

[Hunt, *What Love*, Kindle 4266-4276.]

The Bible says election is not according to works. But Calvinism needs to say election is not according to works or faith.

Calvinism. Westminster Confession (Calvinist):

God ... has chosen in Messiah to eternal glory out of ... grace ... without any foresight of faith or good works.⁵³

[Westminster Confession, Chapter 3, Of God's Eternal Decree, 5. XXX cross 117.]

Bible. Rom. 9:11. The children being not yet born, ... that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calls.

Calvinist Version. The children being not yet born, ... that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works or faith, but of him that calls.

Ephesians 2:8-9.

Eph. 2:3-9. We ... were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Messiah, by grace you are saved ... For by grace are you saved through faith, and THAT [or 'this'] not of yourselves;

IT is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Even Calvinists, who look at the Greek text rather than just the English translation, except for some like Sproul, conclude that “it” in verse 9, doesn’t refer to “faith,” but to the whole salvation described in the context.

Sproul (Calvinist):

Considerable debate has ensued regarding the meaning of the first sentence. What is the antecedent for the word ‘that:’ grace, saved, or faith? The rules of Greek syntax and grammar demand that the antecedent of ‘that’ be the word faith. Paul is declaring what every Reformed person affirms, that faith is a gift from God.⁵⁴

[Sproul, Reformed Theology, 183.]

Stott (Calvinist):

Christ’s apostles clearly teach elsewhere that saving faith too is God’s gracious gift [Acts 18:27; Phil. 1:29]. Nevertheless, Paul is not directly affirming this here because ‘this’ (touto) is neuter, whereas ‘faith’ is a feminine noun. We must therefore take ‘this’ as referring to the whole previous sentence: ‘By God’s grace you are people who have been saved through faith, and this whole event and experience is ... God’s free gift to you.’ ... Salvation is God’s gift, lest any man should boast.⁵⁵

[Stott, Ephesians, 83.]

Calvin (Calvinist):

If, on the part of God, it is grace alone, and if we bring nothing but faith, which strips us of all commendation, it follows that salvation does not come from us. When, on the part of man, the act of receiving salvation is made to consist in faith alone, all other means, on which men are accustomed to rely, are discarded. Faith, then, brings a man empty to God, that he may be filled with the blessings of Christ ... Instead of what he had said, that their salvation is of grace, he now affirms, that “it is the gift of God.” ... In these three phrases, — not of yourselves, — it is the gift of God, — not of works, — he embraces the substance of his long argument in the Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians, that righteousness comes to us from the mercy of God alone, — is offered to us in Christ by the gospel, — and is received by faith alone, without

the merit of works. This passage affords an easy refutation of the idle cavil by which Papists attempt to evade the argument, that we are justified without works And here we must advert to a very common error in the interpretation of this passage. Many persons restrict the word gift to faith alone. But Paul is only repeating in other words the former sentiment. His meaning is, not that faith is the gift of God, but that salvation is given to us by God, or, that we obtain it by the gift of God.⁵⁶

[Calvin, Complete Commentaries, Kindle 531623-531653.]

Bloomfield (Editor of Calvin Commentaries):

It has been not a little debated, among both ancient and modern commentators, to what noun τούτο [this] should be referred. Some say, to πίστις [faith]; others, to χάρις [grace]; though on the sense of πιστις [faith] they differ in their views. The reference seems, however, to be neither to the one nor to the other, but to the subject of the foregoing clause, salvation by grace, through faith in Christ and his gospel; a view, I find, adopted by Dr. Chandler, Dean Tucker, Dr. Macknight, and Dr. A. Clarke. And to show that this interpretation is not a mere novelty, I need only refer the reader to Theophylact, who thus explains: ... ‘He does not say that faith is the gift of God; but to be saved by faith, this is the gift of God.’ Such also is the view adopted by Chrysostom and Theodoret.” ⁵⁷

[Bloomfield in Calvin, Complete Commentaries, Kindle 651698-651725.]

Demarest (Calvinist):

The antecedent of “this” (touto, neuter) is salvation in its totality, of which faith [says Demarest] is one important element.⁵⁸

[Demarest, Salvation, 238.]

White (Calvinist):

It is obvious that one cannot simply say that “faith is the gift” and leave it at that. The word ‘that’ is a neuter gender in the Greek language, ‘faith’

is a feminine term, and ‘have been saved’ is a masculine participle. There is nothing in the first phrase that matches ‘that’ in gender. Instead, the neuter demonstrative pronoun ‘that’ refers to the entirety of the preceding clause. There is nothing in the first clause of Ephesians 2:8 that finds its origin in man, and that includes faith [says White].⁵⁹

[Hunt & White, Debating Calvinism, 200-1.]

Robertson:

And ‘that’ (touto). Neuter, not feminine (tautee), and so refers not to (pistis [faith]) (feminine) or to (charis [grace]) (feminine also), but to the act of being saved by grace conditioned on faith on our part.⁶⁰

[Robertson, Word Pictures, Kindle 151622-151631.]

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

The Greek in Ephesians 2:8-10 makes it impossible for faith to be the gift. Such is the verdict of many Greek authorities, including Alford, [The New Testament for English Readers, 3:216], F. F. Bruce, ... W. E. Vine, Scofield, and others [cited in Samuel Fisk, Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom, 32-36]. Vance notes that “A witness to the truth of Scripture against the Calvinist ‘faith-gift’ interpretation can be found in the Greek grammarians.” He lists W. Robertson Nicoll, [The Expositor’s Greek Testament, 3:289], Kenneth S. Wuest, [Ephesians and Colossians in the Greek New Testament, 69], Marvin R. Vincent [Word Studies in the New Testament, 3:376] and others [Vance, Other Side, 517.] ... The grammar, as W. G. MacDonald says, [will not] “permit ‘faith’ to be the antecedent of ‘it.’” [MacDonald, Grace Unlimited, ed 87; quoted in Samuel Fisk, Calvinistic Paths Retraced, 22] ... Nor does it require a knowledge of Greek, but simply paying attention to the entire context of Ephesians 2:8-10, to realize that salvation, not faith, is “the gift of God”—as all of Scripture testifies. A number of other Greek authorities could be cited to that effect. Though a Calvinist, F. F. Bruce explains, “The fact that the demonstrative pronoun ‘that’ is neuter in Greek (touto), whereas ‘faith’ is a feminine noun (pistis), combines with other considerations to suggest that it is the whole concept of salvation by grace through faith that is described as the gift of God ... Indeed, that very passage [Eph. 2:8-9] says we are “saved, through faith”; i.e., faith is the means of our salvation/regeneration—not something that follows it [as in, “salvation through faith,” 2 Tim. 3:15].⁶¹

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 11583-11609.]

Walls (Non-Calvinist):

The terms (‘faith,’ ‘this,’ ‘it’) that seem so clearly linked in English are not so neatly connected in Greek. The English ear depends largely on word order for making sense of language, and so automatically presumes that ‘this’ (which

“is not from yourselves”) must obviously refer back to ‘faith,’ since ‘faith’ immediately precedes ‘this’ in the word order of the text. But Greek, being an inflected language, actually depends on “tags” that are attached to words for guiding the reader. If our writer had desired readers to connect ‘faith’ directly to ‘this,’ these two words should have matched each other as grammatically feminine. We find, however, that ‘this,’ being neuter in gender, likely points us back several words earlier— to the idea of salvation expressed by the verb. Accordingly, we should read the text with a different line of connections as follows: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this [salvation is] not from yourselves, [this salvation] is the gift of God.” ... Since by its very nature faith confesses the complete lack of human merit and human power, it subtracts nothing from the Savior’s grace or glory. By its very nature, faith points away from all human status and looks to God alone for rescue and restoration ... Faith as biblically portrayed [is] something made possible by God and enacted by man, but not adding to man’s glory. Again, the depiction of Abraham’s faith (in Rom 4) points us in this direction, for it neither names God as the cause of Abraham’s faith nor names Abraham as the one deserving praise.⁶²

[Walls, Why I Am Not a Calvinist, 1138-1166.]

In Ephesians 2:5, the phrase “by grace are you saved” is parenthetical to Paul saying we were made alive with Messiah. And if a few verses later, in Ephesians 2:8, the same phrase “for by grace are you saved through faith” is parenthetical to Paul saying we will receive all riches for eternity in Messiah, then the neuter singular “this” follows right after the neuter singular “riches.”

Eph. 2:3-9. But God, ... even when we were dead in sins, has made us alive together with Messiah (by grace you are saved). And has raised us up together, and made us sit together ... in Messiah Jesus, [so] that in the ages to come he may shew the exceeding riches [neuter singular in Greek] of his grace in his kindness toward us through Messiah Jesus (for by grace are you saved through faith), and this [neuter singular in Greek] not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works.

We know the gift of God is eternal life in Messiah in contrast to the earned wages of sin which is death. “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Messiah our Lord,” Rom. 6:23. And the gift is also the riches of that eternal life in Messiah forever.

These “riches” are not an unimportant theme in Ephesians. “He has made us accepted in the beloved, ... according to the riches of his grace, wherein he has abounded toward us,” Eph. 1:6-8. “That you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and ... the exceeding greatness of his power toward us, ... which he worked in Messiah,” Eph. 1:18-19. “[So] that in the ages to come he may shew the exceeding riches of his grace ... toward us through Messiah,” Eph. 2:7. “To me ... this grace is given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Messiah,” Eph. 3:8. “That [the Father] would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Messiah may dwell in your hearts by faith, ... that you may be filled with all the fulness of God,” Eph. 3:16-19.

Predestination Isn't by Grace

From the priority Reformed theologians give to grace over faith, you would think the Bible would be chock full of references to election, predestination, and calling by grace. But of the 122 instances the word grace appears in the KJV New Testament, I could only find one verse that used a phrase like “election of grace” (Rom. 11:5), and I deal with it below under the heading “10. Grace for a Believing Jewish Remnant.” So, I couldn’t find any verses to support the description of Calvin’s predestination doctrines as the “doctrines of grace,” as they’re often called. Like much of Calvinism, the concept of election, predestination, or calling by grace is based on a logical theological system rather than the actual language of the Bible.

The following verses that mention grace are arranged according to the order in the chart of the Golden Chain of Romans 8. Grace basically relates to the Golden Chain in two areas. 1) God’s gracious provision of redemption and the gospel that enables men who believe to receive justification, union with Messiah, and salvation. 2) Grace in Messiah for sanctification and glorification. God’s gracious provision for redemption enables justification; and once justification removes the legal obstacles to God’s love we receive grace for sanctification, glorification, and all good things in Messiah.

Rom. 5:1-2. Therefore, having been justified by faith [past justification], we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Messiah; by whom also we have had our access by faith into [εἰς, eis] this grace wherein we stand [present sanctification], and rejoice in hope of the glory of God [future glorification].

Rom. 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all things?

Notice in the following verses that grace doesn’t cause faith, and nothing related to the predestination side of the diagram - election, predestination, or calling - is by grace.

Gracious Provision of Redemption

Rom. 3:24. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus

2 Cor. 8:9. You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Messiah, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty can be rich.

Eph. 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Heb. 2:8-10. We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Gracious Provision of the Gospel

Acts 20:24. The gospel of the grace of God

Acts 20:32. The word of his grace.

Col. 1:5-6. You heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, ... the day you heard ... the grace of God in truth.

Gal. 1:6. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Messiah to another gospel.

There Is No Gracious Provision of Faith

Intentionally Left Blank

T2a. Justification by Faith

Justification by faith is man's entryway into the Golden Chain, though it happens later in time than predestination, because of the foreknowledge of God.

We should be focusing on the part of the Reformation the reformers got right, sola fide, justification by faith alone. The following verses show we are justified by faith, not by something or anything else that causes faith. "Justification" and "righteousness" are from the same Greek word.

Acts 13:38. All that believe are JUSTIFIED from all things.

Rom. 3:28. Therefore we conclude that a man is JUSTIFIED by faith without the deeds of the law.

Rom. 4:3. Abraham believed God, and it was counted ... for RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Rom. 4:5. To him that ... believes, ... his faith is COUNTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Rom. 4:9. Faith was RECKONED to Abraham FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Rom. 4:11. The RIGHTEOUSNESS of the faith, ... RIGHTEOUSNESS ... IMPUTED.

Rom. 4:13. The promise ... was ... through the RIGHTEOUSNESS of faith.

Rom. 4:16. He believed, ... therefore it was IMPUTED to him FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Rom. 4:24. For us also, to whom IT WILL BE IMPUTED, if we believe on him.

Rom. 5:1. Being JUSTIFIED by faith, we have peace with God.

Rom. 10:4 The RIGHTEOUSNESS of God ... to every one that believes.

Rom. 10:6. The RIGHTEOUSNESS which is of faith,... which we preach.

Rom. 10:10. With the heart man believes unto RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Gal. 2:20-21. I live by ... faith; ... not ... RIGHTEOUSNESS ... by the law.

Gal. 3:6. Abraham believed God, and it was ACCOUNTED to him FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Gal. 3:8 Foreseeing ... God would JUSTIFY ... through faith.

Gal. 3:11 No man is JUSTIFIED by the law, ... for the just will live by faith.

Gal. 3:21-22 RIGHTEOUSNESS, ... [not] by the law... but ... the promise by faith.

Gal. 3:22-24 To them that believe, ... so that we will be JUSTIFIED by faith.

Gal. 5:5 We through the Spirit wait for the hope of RIGHTEOUSNESS by faith.

Phil. 3:9 Not having my own RIGHTEOUSNESS, ... but ... the RIGHTEOUSNESS which is of God by faith.

Titus 3:7-8. JUSTIFIED by his grace, ... they which have believed.

Jam. 2:21-22. Was not Abraham our father JUSTIFIED by works, when ... faith wrought with his works?

Jam. 2:23. Abraham believed God, and it was IMPUTED to him FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Jam. 2:24. By works a man is [proven] JUSTIFIED, and not by faith only.

Jam. 2:25-26. Wasn't Rahab the harlot [proven] JUSTIFIED by works, ... for ... faith without works is dead.

The Reformation had too many “sola’s,” or “only’s.” Ideally, there should be only be one “only.” Sola scriptura, ‘scripture alone,’ doesn’t conflict with the others, because it’s about the authority of the message, whereas all the others are about the content of the message. But the message of scripture can’t be faith alone (sola fide), and grace alone (sola gratia), and Messiah alone (solus Christus), and God’s glory alone (soli Deo gloria).

The Reformation didn’t restore the doctrine of justification by faith to the earth, but only to partially ‘reformed’ Catholics. The doctrine of justification by faith is essential for salvation, and there have always been saved people on earth in every generation; and more than just the believing, ethnic Jewish remnant promised in Romans 11. But the Roman Catholic church didn’t allow most nonCatholic writings to survive. For example, regarding the Waldenses ...

Wikipedia

Unfortunately, our current knowledge of the history of the Waldensians in the Middle Ages is almost exclusively tributary of the sources coming from the official Roman Church, the body that was condemning them as heretics.⁶³

[Wikipedia, Waldensians, quoting Gonzalo Pita, "Waldensian and Catholic Theologies of History in the XII-XIV Centuries: Part I," Journal of the Adventist Theological Society 25.2, p. 66.]

The Reformation had some negative effects. It furthered the "mystery of lawlessness" (2 Thess. 2:6, ASV) by helping people throw off submission to authority and begin the quest for individualism and equal rights that plague us today. But on the positive side, the Reformation did enable a more public proclamation of justification by faith by some kings and princes protecting its preachers. Unfortunately, the sola fide message was polluted by the sola gratia message. A sola gratia message would be good if it meant everything we receive from God is through his grace. But it came to mean sola gratia causes sola fide, which means it's not really sola fide anymore.

Grudem (Calvinist):

The difference between those who believe and those who do not ... is ultimately based on ... sovereign election; ... [and] the ground of election is God's grace.⁶⁴

[Grudem, Systematic Theology, 678, 686.]

Grudem's order is grace > unconditional election > faith > justification. But the Bible's order is grace > provision of redemption > justification. The Bible contrasts Grace/Faith justification to Law/Works reward. We are ...

Rom. 3:24. [3] Justified freely by his [1] grace through the [2] redemption.

And in parallel, we are also ...

Rom. 3:28. Justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

But Calvinism makes grace the cause of justification by faith, which in effect, replaces justification by faith with

justification by grace.

T2b. Union by Faith

Jn. 6:56. He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood [requirement of faith], dwells in me, and I in him [receipt of union].

1 Jn. 1:3. That which we have seen and heard we declare to you [the gospel] [requirement of faith], so that you also may have union with us, ... with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Messiah [receipt of union].

T2c. Regeneration by Faith

To avoid unnecessary repetition, please see the subsection entitled, “John Says Faith Precedes Regeneration,” for the CV (Calvinist Version) of the verses from John.

Jn. 1:12. As many as received him [requirement of faith], to them he gave the power to become the sons of God [receipt of regeneration], even to them that believe on his name [requirement of faith].

Jn. 3:14-16, 36. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him [requirement of faith] will ... have eternal life [receipt of regeneration]. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him [requirement of faith] will ... have everlasting life [receipt of regeneration]. ... He that believes on the Son [requirement of faith] has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration]; and he that doesn't believe the Son [lack of requirement of faith] will not see life [lack of receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 5:24. He that hears my word and believes on him that sent me [requirement of faith], has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration], and ... is passed from death to life [receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 6:35, 40, 47, 57-58. He that believes on me [requirement of faith] will never thirst [receipt of regeneration] Everyone which sees the Son and believes on him [requirement of faith], will have everlasting life [receipt of regeneration]. ... He that believes on me [requirement of faith] has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration] He that eats me [requirement of

faith], even he will live by me [receipt of regeneration]. ... He that eats of this bread [requirement of faith] will live for ever [receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 7:37-39. He that believes on me [requirement of faith], as the scripture has said, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water [receipt of regeneration]. This he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on him [requirement of faith] will receive [receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 8:23-24. If you don't believe that I am he [lack of requirement of faith], you will die in your sins [lack of receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 9:38. He said, "Lord, I believe [requirement of faith]." And he worshipped him [receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 10:38. Though you don't believe me [lack of requirement of faith], believe the works [requirement of faith], so that you may know [receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 11:25-26. He that believes in me [requirement of faith], ... will ... live [receipt of regeneration]. Whoever ... believes in me [requirement of faith], will never die [receipt of regeneration]. Do you believe this?

Jn. 12:36, 46. Believe in the light [requirement of faith], so that you may be the children of light [receipt of regeneration]. ... Whoever believes on me [requirement of faith], will not abide in darkness [receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 14:11-12. He that believes on me [requirement of faith], the works that I do, he will do also [receipt of regeneration].

Jn. 16:27. The Father himself loves you [receipt of regeneration], because you ... have believed that I came out from God [requirement of faith].

Jn. 17:20-21. [I pray] for ... them ... which will believe on me [requirement of faith], ... so that they all may be one [receipt of regeneration]; ... so that the world may believe.

Jn. 20:31. These are written so that you may believe [requirement of faith]; ... and so that believing [requirement of faith] you may have life [receipt of regeneration].

Gal. 3:2, 26-29. You received ... the Spirit [receipt of regeneration] ... by the hearing of faith [requirement of faith] You are all the children of God [receipt of regeneration] by faith [requirement of faith].

Calvinist Version. You received the hearing of faith [receipt of faith] by the Spirit [requirement of regeneration] You all have faith [receipt of faith] by being the children of God [requirement of regeneration].

Eph. 1:13. After you believed [requirement of faith], you were sealed with that Holy Spirit [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. After you were sealed with that Holy Spirit [requirement of regeneration], you believed [receipt of faith].

T3. Justification to Sanctification

Justification always results in sanctification because of the way in which we were justified. We were justified by means of our union with Messiah at the point of his death, which means we also share in his resurrection and his resurrection life.

Rom. 6:3-5. As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah ["by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," 1 Cor. 12:13 when justified] were baptized into his death. Therefore we are [also] buried with him through [that] baptism-into-death, [for the purpose] so that like as Messiah was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also would walk in newness of life [sanctification]. For since we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we will be also in the likeness of his resurrection [sanctification].

Our death with Messiah changed our legal status and our master. We were emancipated from slavery to sin and the law; and instead enslaved to God, righteousness, and grace.

Rom. 6:6-22. Our old man [the person we were before we were crucified] was crucified with him. ... He that is dead is freed [emancipated] from sin. ... Being then made free [emancipated] from sin, you became the servants of [enslaved to] righteousness. . Being made free [emancipated] from sin, [you] become servants to [enslaved to] God.

By their death with Messiah, our believing Jewish brethren were freed from being under the authority of their old husband, the law, that couldn't give them children because of mankind's own barrenness (Rom. 8:3); and they were resurrected with and married to Messiah, who can miraculously give men fruit.

Rom. 7:1-4. The law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. . My [Jewish] brethren, you also are become dead to [your husband] the law by the body of Messiah; so that you would be married to another, even to him [Messiah] who is raised from the dead, so that we would bring forth fruit to God.

Just as before our justification our having been under the reign and persistent influence of sin resulted with absolute certainty in a general walk of sin, though we could decide not to sin for any particular moment; likewise, after our justification our having been put under the reign and persistent influence of grace results with absolute certainty in a general walk of righteousness in newness of life, though we can decide not to do righteousness for any particular moment.

Rom. 5:17, 21. As sin reigned [over us] to death [with certainty of effectual influence], even so grace reigns [over us] through righteousness [with certainty of effectual influence] to eternal life by Jesus Messiah our Master.

Justification always results in sanctification and glorification, because we were justified by being put into Messiah at the point of his death, in his experience; and at the point of our believing, in our experience. Therefore, legally and mystically, everything else that happened to Messiah after his death, also happened to us, including burial, resurrection, new life, ascension, and glorification.

Eph. 2:5-6. [God] has brought us back to life together with Messiah, ... and has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah [sanctification].

T4. Hope of Glorification Promotes Sanctification

Col. 1:4-5. We heard of your faith in Messiah Jesus [justification], and of the LOVE which you have to all the saints [sanctification], for [because of] the hope which is laid up for you in heaven [glorification].

1 Jn. 3:2-3. When [the Son] will appear, we will be like him; for we will see him as he is. And every man that has this hope in him PURIFIES himself, even as [the Son] is pure.

T5. Works to Sanctification

The Epistle of 1 John

The epistle of 1 John was written for three purposes. The first reason John, forever the evangelist, wrote this epistle was so non-Christians would believe and be saved.

1 Jn. 5:13. These things I have written to you ... so that you may believe on the name of the Son of God.

The second reason is so we can know who's a Christian and who isn't.

1 Jn. 5:13. These things I have written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God; so that you can know that you have eternal life.

Anyone can claim to be a Christian. But John says there are three tests - the test of faith, of obedience, and of love - so we can know without fail if someone who claims to be a Christian actually is or isn't a Christian.

The statements in 1 John are not requirement-receipt statements, like in his gospel. "He that believes on the Son [requirement] has everlasting life [receipt]," Jn. 3:36. Instead they are test statements. "If we say that we have fellowship with him [claim], and walk in darkness [test], we lie [verdict]," 1 Jn. 1:6. It's like how when we say, "if it has apples, it's an apple tree." We don't mean, "if it has apples [requirement], it becomes an apple tree [receipt];" but rather "if it has apples [test], [we know] it's an apple tree [verdict]."

Why would we want to know if someone's Christian or not? Well, it's useful in selecting elders and in knowing who to partner with in the work of the gospel, etc. But an even greater reason is that if, for example, the reliability of the obedience test is dependent on the certainty that every Christian walks in obedience, then if we know we have believed and been justified, we know we are guaranteed a walk of obedience through the unceasing influence of the indwelling Holy Spirit and because of the influence in our lives of our union with God.

1 Jn. 1:5-6. God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have union with him, and walk in darkness, we lie [and don't have union with him].

This gives us confidence and hope in the battle, because a guaranteed "walk" doesn't mean every "step" is guaranteed, and we can become discouraged when we take some steps in sin, which we certainly will sometimes until the day our bodies are glorified. And this brings us to the third reason John wrote his epistle.

1 Jn. 1:4. These things we write to you so that your joy can be full.

So let's look at the first test, the faith test, or testimony test.

1 Jn. 1:8. All Christians Walk in Faith. If we say that we have no sin [self-righteousness], we deceive ourselves [our claim is false], and the truth is not in us [we're not Christians].

If a person doesn't walk in faith, John says we know he's a non-Christian. If there was a single Christian who didn't walk in faith, we wouldn't be able to tell if a person who didn't walk in faith was a non-Christian or not. So we know all Christians walk in faith. Joy!

1 Jn. 1:9. Only Christians Walk in Faith. If we say that we have union with him [claim to be a Christian], and ... if we agree we're sinners [trust in Messiah's righteousness], he is faithful ... to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [our claim is true, we are Christians].

If a person walks in faith, John says we know he's a Christian. If there was a single non-Christian who walked in faith, we wouldn't be able to tell if a person who walked in faith was a Christian or not. So we know only Christians walk in faith. This means even famous non-Christians like Gandhi and Mother Teresa didn't walk in faith.

The second test is the obedience test.

1 Jn. 2:4. All Christians Walk in Obedience. He that says, "I know him [claims to be a Christian]," and doesn't keep his commandments, is a liar [isn't a Christian as he claims], and the truth is not in him.

If a person doesn't walk in obedience, John says we know he's a non-Christian. If there was a single Christian who didn't walk in obedience, we wouldn't be able to tell if a person who didn't walk in obedience was a non-Christian or not. So we know all Christians walk in obedience. Joy!

1 Jn. 2:5. Only Christians Walk in Obedience. But whoever keeps his word, truly in him is the love of God perfected [his claim in verse 4 is true, he's a Christian]. Hereby we know that we are in him [we're Christians].

If a person walks in obedience, John says we know he's a Christian. If there was a single non-Christian who walked in obedience, we wouldn't be able to tell if a person who walked in obedience was a Christian or not. So we know only Christians walk in obedience. This means even famous non-Christians like Gandhi and Mother Teresa didn't walk in obedience.

The third and last test is the love test.

1 Jn. 2:9. All Christians Walk in Love. He that says he is in the light [claims to be a Christian], and hates his brother, is in darkness [isn't a Christian] even until now.

If a person doesn't walk in love, John says we know he's a non-Christian. If there was a single Christian who didn't walk in love, we wouldn't be able to tell if a person who didn't walk in love was a non-Christian or not. So we know all Christians walk in love. Joy!

1 Jn. 2:10. Only Christians Walk in Love. He that loves his brother abides in the light [his claim in verse 9 is true, he's a Christian], and there is no occasion of stumbling in him.

If a person walks in love, John says we know he's a Christian. If there was a single non-Christian who walked in love, we wouldn't be able to tell if a person who walked in love was a Christian or not. So we know only Christians walk in love. This means even famous non-Christians like Gandhi and Mother Teresa didn't walk in love.

Romans 6-8a. New Master, Husband, and Mind

When Romans 6:2 says, "How will we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" it doesn't mean "how can we in good conscience live in sin." It means it's not possible. In general, employees obey their masters; though none obey perfectly, and some obey better than others. But when you change employers, for the most part, your daily activities change.

When we died and rose with Messiah by having been put into him at the point of his death, we were legally emancipated from sin who was our previous master, and enslaved instead to God and righteousness. "Being then emancipated from sin, you became the servants of righteousness," Rom. 6:18. Therefore, it's impossible for us to live the same way we used to, because now we serve righteousness.

2 Cor. 5:17. If any man is in Messiah, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

We also have a new mind through the indwelling Spirit. We love righteousness, and hate sinning; and our new way of thinking, is the key to sanctification.

Rom. 8:5-6. They that are after the flesh do mind [think about] the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit [think about] the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally [fleshly] minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

The Spirit does not force us to do righteousness, but his influence is so strong and persistent that our general way of life can't help but change. Our walk changes without fail, even though every step is still subject to our will.

Some Sins Are Impossible for Christians to Continue In

There are some sins it's impossible for regenerated men to continue in.

1 Cor. 6:9-11. Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified.

Gal. 5:19-21. The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Eph. 5:3-6. Fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it [ideally] not be once named among you [though it's possible to be infrequently named among us], as becomes saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this you know [I hope you know by now], that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Messiah and of God.

Rev. 21:8. The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Let no man deceive you with vain words.

Now, if a regenerated man really forces himself, going against his new nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit, it's possible for him to temporarily continue a limited time in some of those things. But either he will feel so bad he will repent, or God will take him home.

1 John 5:16. If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he will ask, and he will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he should pray for it.

There was a man in Corinth having physical relations with his step-mother. Paul told the Corinthians to stop praying for him, to prohibit him from joining their meetings, and not to eat with him even in private.

1 Cor. 5:4-5, 10. In the name of our Lord Jesus Messiah, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Messiah, to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. ... I have written to you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

If the man had been unregenerate, he could have continued in that sin, and gone on with his life. But since he was a believer, if he didn't repent, God would have taken him home through sickness or accident. "The prayer of faith will save the sick, ... and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him," James 5:15. The man in Corinth stopped having relations with his step-mother; and the congregation welcomed him back.

2 Cor. 2:6-11. Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise [now] you ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one would be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that you would confirm your love toward him To whom you forgive any thing, I forgive also, ... lest Satan would get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Our Works After Justification by Faith Alone

It's really the greatest motivation to godliness, to know it's impossible for us to walk in unrighteousness. We know it makes no sense to invest time and effort to move towards a lifestyle we know is impossible for us to continue in, so we don't even bother going in that direction. However, only the direction of our walk is guaranteed; not each individual step.

There is no spiritual event between justification and glorification for a Christian. "Whom he justified, them he also glorified," Rom. 8:30. Sanctification is a process; not an event. There's no second blessing event that can cause us to walk in perfect righteousness without any sinning. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 Jn. 1:8.

We are guaranteed a minimum of fruit, but the actual amount of fruit depends on our effort. "Good ground ... brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold," Matt. 13:8. "Work out your own salvation [to the max] with fear and trembling. For it is God which works in you [to a guaranteed minimum] both to will and to do of his good pleasure," Phil. 2:12-13.

2 Cor. 13:9. This also we wish, even your perfection.

Look at the amount of effort Paul expended to be perfect, complete, and mature; though he never attained, and though he knew he never would attain until his body was glorified.

Phil. 3:11-15. If by any means I might attain to the [level of perfection of the] resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Messiah Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Messiah Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as [would] be perfect, be thus minded.

Men naturally want to justify themselves by their works. But justification is by faith alone. However, now, after justification, is the time to work! The way to more perfect and fruitful sanctification is not to “let go and let God,” but to use the Bible for “the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2), and to motivate yourself to exert more effort.

“Watch you, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong! Let all your things be done with charity,” 1 Cor. 16:13-14.

The greatest hindrance to Christian sanctification is the false doctrine of “let go and let God,” as taught by John Wesley (Christian perfectionism), Phoebe Palmer, William Boardman (higher life), Hannah Whitall Smith, the Keswick Convention, Charles Trumbull (victorious life), and many others.

As Watchman Nee (1903-1972) erroneously taught:

Watchman Nee:

From now on I will not do anything, I will not manage anything, and I will not be concerned about anything. From now on I will let go. Brothers and sisters, this is surrendering. This is letting go. 51

[Nee, Overcoming Life, 98.]

But Paul says, “We labor” (2 Cor 5:9).

T6. Glorification

Col. 3:4. When Messiah, who is our life, shall appear, then you also will appear with him in glory.

GC Diagram Pg 39, Salvation and Grace in Messiah (S)

So. Salvation in Jesus Messiah

The following verse teaches we receive grace for justification, sanctification, and glorification in Jesus Messiah. But we don’t receive the faith that first justifies us.

1 Cor. 1:29-31. So that no flesh would glory in his presence. But of him are you in Messiah Jesus, who of God is made to us wisdom, and righteousness

[JUSTIFICATION], and SANCTIFICATION, and redemption [GLORIFICATION]; so that, according as it is written, “He that boasts, let him boast in the Lord.”

So. Grace in Messiah

Jn. 1:14, 17. The Word was made flesh, ... full of grace and truth, ... and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace; for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by [διό, dia] Jesus Messiah.

1 Cor. 13:14. The grace of the Lord Jesus Messiah, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

1 Tim. 1:9-10. [God] saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Messiah Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Messiah who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

1 Tim. 2:1. Be strong in the grace that is in [εν, en] Messiah

1 Pet. 5:10. The God of all grace, who has called us to his eternal glory in [εν, en] Messiah Jesus.

Gracious Provision for Justification, Union, & Salvation by Faith

Acts 15:10-11. Why do you tempt God, to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Messiah we will be saved, even as they.

Rom. 3:24. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, ... that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus. ... Boasting ... is excluded ... by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Rom. 4:15. The promise that he should be the heir of the world [Messianic Kingdom and glorification], was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness [justification] of faith. ... It is of

faith, so that it may be by grace, to the end the promise would be sure to all the seed.

Rom. 5:15-16. The grace of God, and the gift by grace,... has abounded to many ... For the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences to justification.

Gal. 2:20-21 I live by the faith of the Son of God. ... I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Messiah is dead in vain.

Gal. 5:4 Messiah has become of no effect to you; whoever of you are justified by the law, you are fallen from for we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness [justification] by faith.

Eph. 1:4-7. Having predestined us to the sonship [υιοθεσία, uiothesia] of Jesus Messiah to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Eph. 2:4-9. God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Messiah, by grace you are saved, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, ... for by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Titus 2:11-12. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

Titus 3:5-7. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, ... so that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that you affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.

1 Pet. 1:9-11. Receiving the end [goal] of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched

diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come to you, ... when [the Spirit] testified beforehand the sufferings of Messiah, and the glory that should follow.

Sanctification

Sanctification isn't part of the golden chain because 1) although it's monergistic in its certainty, since God predestined every believer to be fruitful through the indwelling Holy Spirit; it's also synergistic in that the quantity of fruit over a minimum level is determined by the effort and free will of each believer.

Matt. 13:8. Some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

2) Each link in the Golden Chain is a point-in-time event; thus the aorist tense of each verb - foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified; but sanctification is a process. It's false doctrine to teach that there's a surrender event or a sanctification second blessing event between the events of justification and glorification. Justification is the critical change in a person's life, and glorification is the completion of our salvation.

Rom. 8:30. And whom he justified, them he also glorified.

And, 3) whereas each link in the Golden Chain leads to the next, sanctification doesn't result in glorification. Justification results in glorification because we were justified by union with Messiah at the point of his death, and so we will with all certainty also be like him in his resurrection. The certainty of our glorification is not dependent on the quality of our sanctification walk as believers. Sin and evil works result in death, the way work results in wages; but sanctification and good works don't result in eternal life, because it's a gift.

Rom. 6:22-23. Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit to holiness [sanctification], and the end [not the reward or

the fruit!] everlasting life; for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.

Interestingly, although the quality of our sanctification walk doesn't affect the certainty of our glorification, it does affect the quality and brightness of our glorification. There is such a thing as "a better resurrection" (Heb. 11:35).

1 Cor. 15:41-42. One star differs from another star in glory [brightness]; so also is the resurrection of the dead.

1 Cor. 4:17. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

S2. Grace for Sanctification and Service

Acts 14:26. The grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

Rom. 1:5-7. We have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations. (Also, 1 Cor. 3:10, 15:10; 2 Cor. 4:15; Eph. 3:2, 7-8; Phil. 1:7.)

Rom. 1:7. Grace to you and peace.

Rom. 5:2 By whom also we have had access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.

Rom. 5:17, 21. Much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life by one, Jesus Messiah. ... That as sin has reigned to death, even so might grace reign through righteousness.

Rom. 6:14 Sin will not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.

Rom. 12:3. I say through the grace given to me. (Also, Rom. 15:15, 2 Cor. 1:12, Gal. 2:9.)

Rom. 12:6. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us.

1 Cor. 1:3-5. Grace ... that ... you are enriched ... in all utterance.

Cor. 8:1-2, 7; 9:8. The grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality. ... Therefore, as you abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that you abound in this grace also God is able to make all grace abound toward you, so that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

Cor. 12:8-10. My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Gal. 1:15-16. It pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, so that I would preach him among the heathen.

Eph. 4:7-8. To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Messiah. Wherefore he said, "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men."

Col. 3:16. Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Col. 4:6. Speech ... with grace.

2 Thess. 1:11-12. We pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Messiah may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Messiah.

Titus 2:11-12. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

Heb. 4:15-16 Let us ... come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Heb. 12:27-29. Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Heb. 13:9. Don't be carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats.

Jam. 4:5-6. The spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy. But he gives more grace. Wherefore he said, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Pet. 4:10. As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Pet. 5:9-11. The God of all grace ... stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Pet. 1:1-3. To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Messiah, grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue.

Pet. 3:18. Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Messiah.

S3. Grace for Glorification

Rom. 5:21. So that as sin has reigned to death, even so would grace reign through righteousness [justification and obedience] to eternal life by Jesus Messiah our Lord.

Eph. 2:6-7. When we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Messiah, by grace you are saved, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, o that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Messiah Jesus.

2 Thess. 1:10-12. When he will come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day ... So that the name of our Lord Jesus Messiah may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Messiah.

2 Thess. 2:15-17. He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Messiah, ... and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.

Titus 3:5-7 According to his mercy he saved us, ... so that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1 Pet. 1:13. Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Messiah.

Grace for a Believing Ethnic Jewish Remnant

Rom. 11:5-7. There is a[n] [ethnic Jewish] remnant according to the election of grace, and if by grace, then is it no more of works. ... Israel has not obtained that which he seeks for; but the election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

Romans 11:5 is the only verse I found about election by grace, but it's talking about how God providentially controls the birth and other circumstances of ethnic Jewish people he foreknows in Messiah so there will be always be a believing, Jewish remnant in every generation, not an election to faith. Most Calvinists don't even believe ethnic Jews have any special role in God's plans, despite Romans 11, so this won't be their favorite verse even though it's the only one that mentions any kind of predestination by grace.

Grace by Faith, not Faith by Grace

Grace doesn't cause faith; faith makes grace possible.

Rom. 4:15. It is of faith so that it can be by grace.

We are not called into faith through grace, but called into grace through the gospel we believe.

Gal. 1:6. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Messiah to another gospel.

We don't enter faith by having been put into grace through election, despite Calvinism's claims). We enter grace by having been justified by faith.

Rom. 5:2. By whom also we have [had our] access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.

Justification by faith puts us into Messiah, which is the only place salvation grace is, and which we can't partake of before justification.

2 Tim. 2:1. The grace that is in Messiah Jesus.

Acts 18:27 can seem to say grace causes faith.

Acts 18:27. When [Apollos] was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him, who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace.

Spurgeon (Calvinist):

It was grace that chose the people whom God would save. ... It is sovereign grace which is ... the active movement of the divine will to produce the results which have been graciously determined. . To meet the deep depravity of our nature, . he who gave the gospel to be believed, also gives the faith that believes the gospel. . God's grace ... made me to differ; and I [give] to God, . the credit of my choice of Messiah. . If you believest through grace, that grace which made thee believe is the best guarantee that you shalt keep on believing. . I defy my free-will to fling away what it never brought to me. ... The men of Corinth to whom Apollos came had

believed through grace. Beloved, there is a sweet ring about this description.⁶⁶

[Spurgeon, Works: Volume 36, Sermons 2121-2181, Kindle 22817-22821.]

There are uncertainties about the text of Acts 18:27 since the Latin versions do not include the phrase “through grace,” and the Syriac renders the phrase “helped them much through grace which had believed.” Even when rendered as in the KJV, “who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace,” many interpret the verse to mean the grace was on Apollos who helped the believers at Corinth through his ministry to them.

An interpretation relevant to the situation of the Corinthians is that grace provided the messenger, the message, and the other circumstances that allowed the Corinthians the opportunity to hear the gospel and believe. The believers in Corinth faced a lot of unbelieving Jewish opposition. When Paul started the ministry in Corinth, he ...

Acts 18:12-13. Testified to the Jews that Jesus was Messiah. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he ... said to them, ... ‘From henceforth I will go to the Gentiles.’ Later, “the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, ‘This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.’

Then while Paul was away in Syria, Galatia, and Ephesus, Apollos came to Corinth and was a great help to those who had believed despite the opposition of Jews who followed the works of the law.

Acts 18:28. For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the [Old Testament Jewish] scriptures that Jesus was Messiah.

The gospel is the message about the redemption God provided by grace. Therefore it's "the gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20:24, and "the word of his grace," Acts 14:3, 20:32. But it only enables, and doesn't cause faith, which makes grace possible as shown earlier.

Another passage, First Timothy 1:12-16, could be read to imply Paul received faith by grace.

1 Tim. 1:12-16. I thank Messiah Jesus our Lord, who has enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Messiah Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Messiah Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Messiah might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

But I don't read this to mean God caused Paul to have faith as the prime example of God saving the incorrigible; but rather God choose Paul to be an apostle as the prime example of every believer's changed life and expression of faith, obedience, love, and service after justification by faith.

Comments on Select Verses

Acts 13:48. As many as were ordained [τεταγμένοι (τάσσω)] to eternal life, believed.

This verse doesn't say "as many as were ordained to believe, believed." If it said that, there wouldn't be any need for this book. If we were predestined to faith, as Calvinism teaches, this would have been a great place for God to say so.

Calvin (Calvinist). We were as much ordained to faith in Christ before the foundation of the world, as we were chosen to the inheritance of eternal life in Christ.

No. The Bible doesn't say that, and it can't say that. Calvinism is built on something the Bible never says, and can't say, which shows Calvinism wrong.

This verse teaches predestination to eternal life, i.e. to glorification, not to faith. Logically, this verse would be equally true whether God 1) predestined some men to faith so they would later be glorified (Calvinism), or 2) predestined to glorification those he intimately foreknew in Messiah from eternity past through their having been justified by faith (the Bible).

In Acts 10, God used Peter, who had "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 16:19), to unlock the door of faith to God-fearing Gentiles. In Acts 11, the church of Antioch Syria was comprised of only Jews, Gentile proselytes, and God-fearing synagogue-associated Gentiles. And in Acts 13, the first sabbath Paul preached in the synagogue at Antioch Pisidia, some Jews and Gentile proselytes believed. "When the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, ... [and] the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas," Acts 13:42-43. But the "the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God, ... the multitudes," Acts 13:44-45. The faith of large numbers of non-proselyte, non-synagogue-associated Gentiles, Gentiles in lifestyle as well as in name, was a new phenomenon described as God having "opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27).

Acts 13:48 assures us that God's providence controls each person's circumstances, so even Gentiles in places like Asia Minor will be sent a gospel preacher and come to faith if they are foreknown of God in Messiah and thus predestined to glorification (eternal life).

1 Cor. 1:24-30. To them which are called [κλητοῖς], ... MESSIAH the power of god. ... You see your calling [κλησιν], brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen [εξελέξατο] the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen [εξελέξατο, ekseleksato] the weak things of the world to

confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen [ἐξελέξατο], . that no flesh would glory in his presence. But of him are you IN MESSIAH Jesus, who of God is made to us wisdom, and RIGHTEOUSNESS [justification], and SANCTIFICATION, and REDEMPTION [glorification, Rom. 8:23].

Logically, God could have called “not many mighty, not many noble,” 1 Cor. 1:26, either by 1) predestining more lowly people to believe (Calvinism), or 2) providentially controlling the birth and social circumstances of those he foreknew “in Messiah,” 1 Cor. 1:30; but the Bible doesn’t teach predestination to faith. God predestined the majority of those who believe to be born and live in humble social circumstances ...

1 Cor. 1:29. So that no flesh would glory in his presence.

James 2:5; Lu. 6:20. James 2:5. Has not God chosen [ἐξελέξατο] the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?

Lu. 6:20. He lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, “Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”

It’s always been more difficult for rich people to believe than for poor people, which would not be true if no one can believe anyway as Calvinism teaches. To trust God for forgiveness of sin requires a person to humbly admit he’s a sinner. And to accept a God-provided righteousness requires not trusting in one’s own self-righteousness.

Matt. 5:3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It was easier for the outcasts, tax collectors, prostitutes, and poor people to believe on Jesus than for the rich, and the rulers, priests, and rabbis.

Mark 12:37. The common people heard him gladly.

If you want to have much fruit and see many people saved, focus your ministry in the poor sections of your town. If you want to

collect a lot of money for salaries and buildings and equipment, minister in the rich sections of your town.

Luke 18:11-42. The Pharisee stood and prayed, ... “I thank you, that I am not as other men, ... or even as this publican.” ... And the publican ... would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven . saying, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” ... This man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalts himself will be abased; and he that humbles himself will be exalted. . Whoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will in no wise enter therein. And a certain ruler asked him, . “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” . Jesus ... said, ... “Sell all that you have, . and come, follow me.” And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, ... “It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God [But] the things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”

If a Calvinist can believe God controls who believes and who doesn't, can't a Calvinist believe God providentially controls who is born rich and who is born poor? Calvinists believe God micromanages both things, but there is no logical necessity for God to control both to accomplish his will that the majority of believers be of lower social status. And the Bible doesn't teach predestination to faith.

Matt. 11:25-27; Lu. 10:21. **Matt. 11:25-27.** You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes, ... for so it seemed good in your sight. ... Neither knows any man the father, save the Son, and he to whomever the Son will [βούληται] reveal him.

Luke 10:21-22. Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, “I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in your sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

You can't know God until after (logically, though simultaneously chronologically) you are justified. No unbeliever knows God; and

every believer knows God. The message and power of the gospel enables an unbeliever who doesn't know God to believe and be justified.

1 Jn. 1:3. That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, so that you also may have fellowship (union) with us, ... with the Father, and with his Son.

1 Thess. 1:3-5. Remembering ... your work of faith [justification faith results in works], and labor of love [sanctification love results in labor], and endurance of hope [glorification hope results in endurance] in our Lord Jesus Messiah; . knowing . your election [εκλογήν] of God. For our gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power.

“Your work of faith,” doesn't mean faith is a work, but that genuine justification faith always produces works.

James 2:18. Though a man says he has faith, and doesn't have works, can [that kind of] faith save him? ... I will show you my faith by my works.

Some of the works the Thessalonians did that showed they had saving faith included:

1) Vs. 6. You became followers of us ... having received the word in much affliction

2) Vs. 7. You were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia

3) Vs 9. You turned to God from idols.

Man's faith is necessary to make the gospel effective to justify.

Rom. 1:16. The gospel ... is the power of God to salvation, [but only] to every one that believes.

Heb. 4:2. To us the gospel was preached, as well as to them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

But once the word is believed, which justifies and regenerates by spiritual birth, from then on the word never stops working

effectually.

1 Thess. 2:13. You received the word of God which you heard of us, ... which effectually works also in you that believe.

Justifying faith, which produces works; sanctification, which is primarily love; and endurance for our hope of glorification, are all evidence of having been elected.

1 Thess. 1:3. Knowing ... your election of God.

That would be true whether 1) God caused faith in those he elected, or 2) God elected those he intimately foreknew from eternity past through their union with Messiah through justification by faith. But the Bible doesn't teach election to faith.

Thess. 2:8-14. That Wicked [one], ... whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God will send them strong delusion, that they will believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen [εἰλατο] you to SALVATION [not to faith] through SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit and belief of the truth [justification]; [salvation] whereto he called you by our gospel, [not to faith, but] to THE OBTAINING OF THE GLORY of our Lord Jesus Messiah [glorification].

Notice God has chosen and called you "to salvation" (2 Thess. 2:13) and to the culminating part of salvation, glorification, not 'to faith.' God's part is to choose "to salvation" (vs. 13), and to sanctify (meaning set apart) those he foreknew in Messiah, preserving their physical lives and ensuring someone brings them the gospel message, etc., and man's part is "belief of the truth" (vs. 13).

Notice the following parallelism in 2 Thess. 2:8-14, between the lost who will take the mark of the beast during the future tribulation period, and the saved that Paul preached to in Thessalonica.

Deception ... in them that perish because they received not ... the truth;
... that they all might be damned who believed not the truth.

God has chosen you to salvation through ... belief of the truth; [salvation]
whereto he called you by [belief of] our gospel.

Second Thessalonians 2 is Paul's prophesy about the events John prophesies about in Revelation 13 - 14.

Rev. 13:8. All that dwell on the earth will worship [the antichrist],
[everyone] whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain
from the foundation of the world.

It would be logically true, that everyone whose name isn't in the book of life doesn't believe the gospel, whether they 1) can't believe because their names aren't in the book, or 2) their names aren't in the book because God hasn't foreknown them from the beginning in the eternal Messiah through their justification by faith.

Rev. 13:11-16; 14:6-10. Another beast ... deceives them, ... and ...
causes all ... to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads. ... I saw
another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to
preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation . and people. . And
the third angel . saying, . 'If any man worship the beast and his image, and
receive his mark, . the same will drink of the wine of the wrath of God . for ever
and ever.

In the middle of the future 7-year tribulation period, God will send angels to preach "the everlasting gospel" to everyone from the air, and warn everyone of the consequences of taking the mark of the beast, so everyone will be without excuse.

Taking the mark of the beast is a point of no return, with no more possibility of being saved, just like the angels that sinned, or like people after we die. Before that point, they could have believed; but after that point, they will not be able to believe because, "God will send them strong delusion, that they would believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth," 2 Thess. 2:11. If Calvinism

was true, God wouldn't have to send them a strong delusion to keep them from believing, but would only have to refrain from regenerating those who take the mark, and total depravity would simply continue to prevent them from believing.

This situation is similar to when Jesus began speaking in parables in Matthew chapter 13 to hide the truth after his generation of Israel rejected him in chapters 11-12, which would have been unnecessary if total depravity meant an inability to believe. It would be a waste of time to blindfold dead men, so being spiritually dead must not include an inability to believe the gospel.

Matt. 13:10-15. The disciples ... said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He answered, ... "I [speak] to them in parables ... lest at any time they would . understand with their heart, and would be converted [to accept him as Messiah]." . All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables [from that time forward]; and without a parable he didn't speak to them.

Unbelievers during the tribulation period have the ability to believe when they hear the gospel, until they take the mark of the beast, which is a point of no return. Also, every person who believes the gospel reaches a good point of no return as soon as he believes, because then he receives the indwelling Holy Spirit that makes it impossible for him to ever stop believing.

2 Thess. 2:11-15. Let no man deceive you [believers] by any means" (2 Thess. 2:3) [because it's not possible]. God will send them [unbelievers who take the mark] strong delusion, so that they would believe a lie, so that they all might be damned who didn't believe the truth; ... but we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, ... because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through ... belief of the truth, ... to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Messiah. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.

Belief of the truth is monergistic after justification by faith because from then on, without fail, we continue to believe the truth through the sanctifying work of the Spirit. But it's synergistic before

salvation, in that God did not choose us “to belief of the truth” (2 Thess. 2:13), but “to salvation” (2 Thess. 2:13) which we enter via justification through belief of the truth.

Titus 1:1-3. Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Messiah, according to the faith of God's elect [justification], and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness [sanctification]; in hope of eternal life [glorification], which God, that cannot lie, promised [he promised glorification] before the world began, but has in due times manifested his word through preaching.

This passage doesn't say anything about being “elected to faith,” but rather “the faith of God's elect,” indicating only that all the elect have faith. But this passage doesn't indicate whether all the elect have faith 1) because they were elected to believe, or 2) because God elected everyone he foreknew in Messiah through their union with him through justification by faith.

Similarly, everyone who is being sanctified will also be glorified; not because sanctification results in glorification, because it doesn't, but because both sanctification and glorification are the certain results of union in Messiah through justification by faith.

The thing that God promised before the world began wasn't faith, but “eternal life” (Titus 1:2) via predestination of the provision of Messiah's death as the sacrificial lamb, it's announcement in the gospel, and predestination to glorification.

2 Pet. 3:9-13. The Lord is ... longsuffering toward us, not willing [βούλομαι] that any would perish, but that all would come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. . What manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness [sanctification], looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God [glorification], . we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth.

God doesn't will [βούλομαι] any to perish, and perishing is the opposite of glorification. He does will that all come “to repentance” (not “to faith”).

Sproul believes the “willing” is determinate here, but that “us,” “any,” and “all,” refers only to believers.

Sproul (Calvinist):

Since 2 Peter is written by a Christian believer to Christian believers and for Christian believers, it is likely that us refers to Christian believers. ... All of the elect come to repentance. All of the elect come to faith ... None of the elect perish.⁵² [*Sproul, What is Reformed Theology?, Kindle 197-8.*]

Pink also says the “willing” of 2 Peter 3:9 is determinate, and that the “all” that will “come to repentance,” refers to the elect who haven’t yet repented.

Pink (Calvinist):

The “any” that God is not willing should perish are the “usward” to whom God is “longsuffering,” the “beloved” of the previous verses. ... God will not send back Christ till that “people” whom He is now “taking out of the Gentiles” (Act 15:14) are gathered in His decreed purpose is that all His elect will come to repentance, and repent they shall. The present interval of grace will not end until the last of the “other sheep” of John 10:16 are safely folded—then will Christ return.⁶⁸

[*68 Pink, Does God Love Everyone?, Kindle 124-131.*]

But I don’t think βούλομαι [wills], even for God, always refers to “determinate will,” because it’s frequently translated “wish,” “want,” and “desire,” in regards to men, in addition to “purpose.” So I think 2 Peter 3:9 says God desires all people to repent, but some don’t and perish.

Ephesians 1.

Eph. 1:3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Messiah, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Messiah.

A key phrase in Ephesians 1, like in so many other passages of Paul, is the phrase “in Messiah” (Eph. 1:3), referring to our union with him. We enter into union with him by justification by faith, and in

him we then have all of salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification.

Eph. 1:4. According as he has chosen [ἐξελέξατο] us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and without blame before him in love.

Very few verses in the New Testament are about who God chose; most are about what we've been chosen to. This one is about both. Whom did God choose? Everyone "in him." (Eph. 1:4). Everyone he foreknew in Messiah from "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). It doesn't matter at what point in time you enter Messiah by faith. Since Messiah is eternal, and one with the Father, everyone in him at any time has been infinitely, intimately known by the Father for all eternity, past, present, and future.

Ephesians 1 seems to clearly say we are chosen on the basis of being in Messiah. "Rufus, chosen in the Lord" (Rom. 16:13), not 'chosen [to be] in the Lord.' And here in Ephesians, "chosen ... in him" (Eph. 1:4), not 'chosen to be in him.' And we know the Bible teaches we enter into union with Messiah through justification by faith.

It might seem a strange way of 'choosing,' for God to 'choose' all who are foreknown in Messiah, "according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). But Jesus 'chose' all the Father gave him. "I have manifested your name to the men which you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me," Jn. 17:6. So Jesus didn't really do any choosing as to "who." The important thing is what he chose them to. "I have chosen you, and ordained you, THAT you would go and BRING FORTH FRUIT [sanctification, not faith], and that your fruit would REMAIN [glorification, not faith]," Jn. 15:16.

Eph. 1:5-6. Having predestinated [προορίσας] us to the sonship [υιοθεσία, uiothesia] by Jesus Messiah to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will [εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος], to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved.

According to Romans 8, “the adoption of children” (Eph. 1:5), or as I translate, “the sonship,” includes our future glorification, “waiting for the sonship, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23). The “good pleasure of his will” is “the Father's will which sent me, that of all which he has given me I would lose nothing, but would raise it up again at the last day [glorification].”

To be “accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6), ultimately means to be “conformed to the [resurrected and glorified] image of his Son” that we are predestinated to (Rom. 8:29). The climax of his grace, his ultimate goal for us, is our future glorification, the “glory of his grace” (Eph. 1:6).

Eph. 2:6-7. [God] has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, [for the purpose] so that in the ages to come [future glorification] he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Messiah Jesus.

Eph. 1:7-8. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

God not only predestined us to glory, but predestined Messiah to his suffering before his glory to provide our salvation. Faith is not a work, because faith is to trust in the work of God in providing “redemption through his blood ... according to ... his grace” (Eph. 1:7).

Eph. 1:9-10. Having made known to us the mystery of his will [θελήματος], according to his good pleasure [εὐδοκίαν] which he has purposed in himself [προέθετο]; [not ‘that we would believe,’ but] that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Messiah [glorification], both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.

The whole creation, to some extent, will share in the future glorification of our bodies.

Rom. 8:18-23. [Regarding] the glory which will be revealed in us, ... the earnest expectation of creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God, ... because creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, ... waiting for the sonship, to wit, the redemption of our bod[ies].

This is God's ultimate purpose for us and the rest of his creation.

Eph. 1:11-12. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated [προορισθέντες] according to the purpose [πρόθεσιν] of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will [βουλήν του θελήματος]; that we would be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted [προηλπικότας, hoped] in Messiah.

We who “trusted in Messiah” (vs. 11) are predestined to our future “inheritance” of sharing in Messiah’s “glory” (Eph. 1:12). We aren’t predestined ‘to trust in Messiah.’

Eph. 1:13-14. In whom you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after you believed [no mention of being predestined to believe], you were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of his glory.

“AFTER you heard ... the gospel, [and] ... AFTER you believed, you were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:13). Calvinism says we’re regenerated by the Spirit before we believe so we will believe. But Paul says it’s after we believe that we receive the Spirit, which is the down payment that guarantees “the purchased possession,” (Eph. 1:14) the future glorification of our bodies. Redemption is incomplete until our bodies are glorified.

Rom. 8:23. Ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the sonship, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Eph. 1:15-16. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making

mention of you in my prayers.

“Your faith” (Eph. 1:15), not “the faith God gave you,” results in justification, and justification always results in sanctification, “love to all the saints” (Eph. 1:15).

Eph. 1:17-18. That the God of our Lord Jesus Messiah, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling [κλήσεως], and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

One of the most important things God and Paul want us to know as Christians, is that we are called to a certain and sure future hope of eternal inheritance of glory (not to faith). It’s important to our present decision making, “wisdom ... knowledge ... understanding” (Eph. 1:17), and to our fruitfulness.

In summary, Ephesians 1 has all the words and phrases Calvinists love so much.

Eph. 1:4-5. Chosen [εξελέξατο] before the foundation of the world, ... predestinated [προορίσας] according to the good pleasure of his will [εὐδοκίαν του θελήματος].

Eph. 1:9-11. The mystery of his will [θελήματος], according to his good pleasure [εὐδοκίαν] which he has purposed [προέθετο] in himself. ... Being predestinated [προορισθέντες] according to the purpose [πρόθεσιν] of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will [βουλήν του θελήματος].

Eph. 1:17-18. That you may know what is the hope of his calling [κλήσεως].

But unfortunately for Calvinists, the passage is not about Calvinism. It’s not about being chosen or predestined to faith, which is Calvinism. It’s about being chosen and predestined to sanctification and glorification, which is the Bible.

Eph. 1:4-6. He has chosen [εξελέξατο] us in him before the foundation of the world that we would be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated [προορίσας] us to the sonship, ... to the praise of the glory.

Eph. 1:9-10. The mystery of his will [θελήματος], according to his good pleasure [εὐδοκίαν] which he purposed in himself [προέθετο], that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Messiah [glorification].

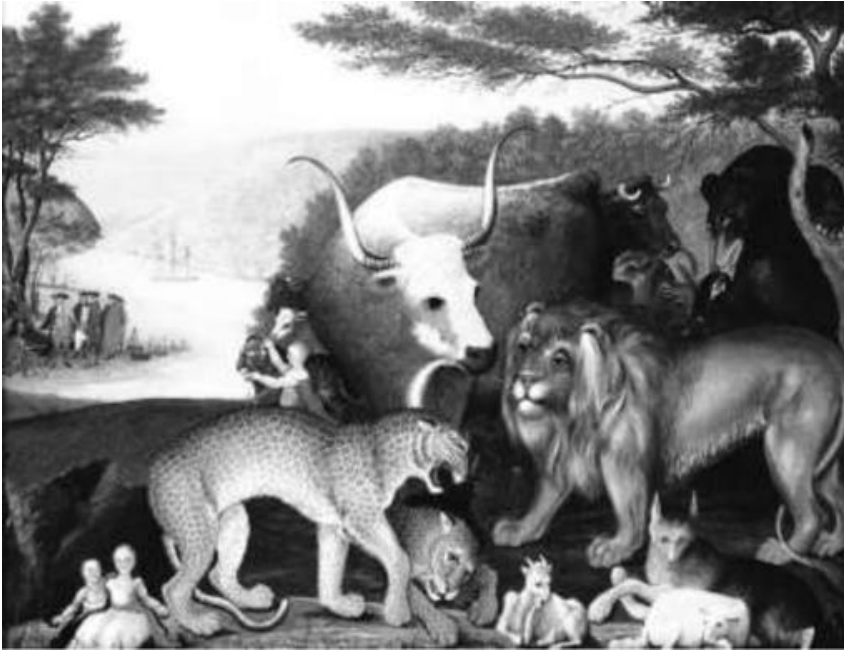
Eph. 1:11-12. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated [προορισθέντες] according to the purpose [πρόθεσιν] of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will [βουλήν του θελήματος]; that we would be to the praise of his glory.

Eph. 1:13-14. That holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of his glory.

Eph. 1:17-18. That you may know what is the hope of his calling [κλήσεως], and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

What does Ephesians 1 say about faith? That it's from us.

Eph. 1:12-16 That we would be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Messiah. In whom you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. In whom also after you believed, you were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. ... Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, ... cease not to give thanks for you.



Romans 9. Prepared to Glory Not to Faith

Romans 9 is an important chapter for Calvinism.

Flowers (Non-Calvinist):

Would anyone dare adopt or seek to defend this most troubling doctrine [of reprobation] if not for the perceived defense offered by the apostle in Romans 9?69

[69 Flowers, Potter's Promise, Kindle 169-170.]

Luther (Calvinist):

[Flesh thinks] Majesty which is the Creating Cause of all things, must bow to one of the dregs of His creation [Flesh thinks] it is absurd that He should condemn him; who cannot avoid the merit of damnation. And, on account of this absurdity, it must be false, that "God has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and hardens whom He will." (Rom. ix. 18). He must ... damn not any one but him, who, according to our judgment, deserves to be damned. ... But if God ... have respect unto merit, why do those impious ones murmur and expostulate? Why do they say, "Why doth He find fault? for who hath resisted His will?" (Rom. ix. 19). And what need was there for Paul to restrain them? For who wonders even, much less is indignant and expostulates, when any one is damned who merited damnation?54

[Luther, Bondage of the Will, 162.]

Luther (Calvinist):

It is this, that seems to give the greatest offence to common sense or natural reason, - that the God, who is set forth as being so full of mercy and goodness, should, of His mere will, leave men, harden them, and damn them, as though He delighted in the sins, and in the great and eternal torments of the miserable. To think thus of God, seems iniquitous, cruel, intolerable; and it is this that has given offence to so many and great men of so many ages. And who would not be offended? I myself have been offended more than once, even unto the deepest abyss of desperation; nay, so far, as even to wish that I had never been born a man; that is, before I was brought to know how healthful that desperation was, and how near it was unto grace.⁵⁴

[54 Ibid., 147.]

Calvin (Calvinist):

Now let that memorable passage of Paul (Rom. 9:10-13) come forth before us. This passage alone should abundantly suffice to put an end to all controversy among the sober-minded and obedient children of God. And although it is no wonder that that eyeless monster, Pighius, should mock with contempt the words of the apostle himself, yet I hope I shall bring all readers of a sound mind to abhor such barbarous audacity in profaning the Scripture as this monster evinces.⁵⁴

[Calvin, Eternal Predestination, Kindle 418-421.]

Berkouwer (Calvinist):

Every hesitation about or hidden resistance against the sovereign freedom of God, every form of indeterminism which defends man's cooperation against the divine act, will suffer shipwreck on Romans 9.⁷³

[Berkouwer, Divine Election, 216, in Shank. Elect in the Son, Kindle 1299-1300.]

Pink (Calvinist):

It is a remarkable and telling phenomenon that those who find no individual predestination to eternal life in Rom 9:6-13 cannot successfully explain the thread of Paul's argument as it begins in Rom 9:1-5 and continues through the chapter.⁷⁴

[Piper, Romans 9:1-23, Kindle 943-945.]

The Context of Chapters 9 - 11

The main proposition of the book of Romans is that “Justification Always Results in Sanctification and Glorification.” The gospel is “the power of God to salvation [all of salvation, including justification, sanctification, and glorification] because therein is the righteousness of God [justification] revealed” (Rom. 1:16-17). The gospel is the power of God to all of salvation, because it’s the power of God to justification, which in turn, unfailingly always results in the rest of salvation: sanctification and glorification.

The topic of Romans is salvation, as newly announced in the “gospel [good news] of God” (Rom. 1:1), which “he had promised before by his prophets in the holy scriptures” (Rom. 1:2), and thus which does not contradict the Old Testament. “Salvation [is] to every one that believes [but it’s] to the Jew first,” Rom. 1:16, 2:9, 2:10. So, after every section of Romans, Paul demonstrates the new good news doesn’t contradict the established truth of the law. Per the outline below, Romans 9-11 is about how Israel’s national glorification is not supplanted by each believer’s individual glorification that Paul had just talked about in Romans 8.

ROM. FIRST/LAST SECTION VERSES. GOSPEL CONFIRMS LAW 1

Section		All Men	The Jewish People
Intro		1:1-1:17	
1:183:20 Con- demnation		1:18-2:16	2:17-3:20
	1st	The wrath of God ... against <u>ALL</u> ... <u>MEN</u> . 1:18	Called a <u>JEW</u> , and rest in the <u>LAW</u> . 2:17
	Last	God will judge the secrets of <u>MEN</u> . 2:16	By the deeds of the <u>LAW</u> no flesh will be justified. 3:20
3:214:25 Justification		3:21-3:30	3:31-4:25
	1st	The righteousness of God <u>WITHOUT THE LAW</u> is manifested. 3:21	Do we then make void the <u>LAW</u> through faith? 3:31
	Last	The <u>CIRCUMCISION</u> ... <u>AND UNCIRCUMCISION</u> through faith. 3:30	It was not written for his [ABRAHAM’S] sake alone. 4:23
5:1-21 Justif. Always Results in Sanc- tif. & Glorif.		5:1-10	5:11-21
	1st	Justified [justif.], ... <u>WE</u> [have] ... grace [sanct.], and ... hope [glorif.] 5:1-2	For until the <u>LAW</u> . 5:13
	Last	Being reconciled, [justification] <u>WE</u> will be saved	The <u>LAW</u> entered ... so grace can reign [sanct.]

		[glorif.]. 5:10	through righteousness [justif.] to eternal life [glorif.] 5:20-21
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ROM. FIRST/LAST SECTION VERSES. GOSPEL CONFIRMS LAW 2

Section		All Men	The Jewish People
6:18:10 Sanc- tifica- tion		6	7:1-8:10
	1st	Shall <u>WE</u> continue in sin, that grace may abound? 6:1	I speak to them that know the <u>LAW</u> . 7:1
	Last	Being made ... servants to God, <u>YOU</u> have your fruit to holiness. 6:22	The carnal mind ... is not subject to the <u>LAW</u> of God. 8:7-9
8:1111:36 Glori- fica- tion		8:11-39	9-11
	1st	He that raised up Messiah ... will also quicken <u>YOUR</u> mortal bodies. 8:11	Continual sorrow ... for <u>MY BRETHREN</u> , ... who are <u>ISRAELITES</u> . 9:1-4
	Last	[Nothing] ... able to separate <u>US</u> from the love of God ... in Messiah. 8:39	So, <u>ALL ISRAEL</u> will be saved! ... Amen! 11:2636
12-15 Practice		12:1-15:7	15:8-15:33
	1st	I beseech you therefore, [re] ... <u>YOUR</u> reasonable service. 12:1	Jesus Messiah was a minister of the <u>CIRCUMCISION</u> . 15:8
	Last	Receive <u>YOU</u> one another, as Messiah also received US. 15:7	The God of <u>SHALOM</u> be with you all. Amen. 15:33
Conclu.		16	

If the gospel contradicts the Old Testament, then the gospel can't be true, because we know Moses and the prophets spoke for God. If the church replaces Israel, then God's word, promises, and prophecies failed, and God doesn't keep his word. You can't promise something to one person, and keep your word by giving it to another. If Israel's national glorification is insecure, then every believer's individual glorification is insecure. If God can replace Israel with the church, he can replace the church with another entity.

Rom. 9:1-3. God Loves Israel

Rom. 9:1-3. I say the truth in Messiah, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites.

Calvinist Version, Rom. 9:1-3. I rejoice and give glory to God that my kinsmen according to the flesh are accursed from Messiah so God can eternally display his power and wrath on them.

Calvinists say God doesn't love all people, just all kinds of people. That makes Paul more loving than Calvinism's god, since Paul loves those who are "accursed from Messiah," Rom. 9: 3.

Pink:

One of the most popular beliefs of the day is that God loves everybody, and the very fact that it is so popular with all classes ought to be enough to arouse the suspicions. ... With the exception of John 3:16 ["God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son"], not once in the four Gospels do we read of the Lord Jesus, the perfect teacher, telling sinners that God loves them! . Proverbs 8:17: "I love them that love me." 56

[Pink, Does God Love Everyone, Kindle 11-38.]

When the rich, young ruler asked Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life, and assured Jesus he had kept all the law from his youth up ...

Mark 10:21. Then Jesus beholding him loved him.

And knowing what that particular man's obstacle to faith was, Jesus told him to sell everything, and give the money to the poor, and follow him. But the rich ruler ...

Mark 10:22. Went away grieved, for he had great possessions.

This man doesn't sound like one of the elect, and yet Jesus loved him, and there's no rift between those whom Jesus loves and those whom the Father loves.

It's true God's righteousness requires him to limit the expression of his love for sinners to the redemption he made available for them in Jesus Messiah. But what an amazing love that is!

1 Jn. 2:2; 3:16; 4:9-16. He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. ... Hereby we perceive the

love of God, because he laid down his life for us. ... In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. . The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. . We love him, because he first loved us. ... God is love.

Legal obstacles prevent the righteous God from freely expressing his love to us in every way before justification - which also means God isn't free to regenerate us before we are justified by faith. But after the legal obstacles are removed through forgiveness of sins (justification), God is free to love us in every way and without limit.

Rom. 8:32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all things?

Rom. 5:5-10. The love of God is shed abroad [now that we've been justified] in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time, Messiah died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, ... but God demonstrated his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we will be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we will be saved by his life.

Only after the legal problems are solved can we begin receiving the "much more[s]" (Rom. 5:9-10) of God's love. God, who "is love" (1 Jn. 4:16), is doing everything he can righteously do to save everyone he created, but he is limited by his righteousness. He can't be unjust, even to save sinners.

Calvinists don't think God is limited by anything; not by logic, righteousness, or love. They think anything God would do would be righteous because he's God. If were to lie, they would now think lying is righteous, which is unscriptural. They think God has the ability to save everyone without being unrighteous, but doesn't want to. In fact, they think God creates most people for the express purpose of predestinating them to sin so he can glorify himself by

punishing them forever. They base this error on their misinterpretation of “Has not the potter power ... to make ... vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?” (Rom. 9:21-22). But although the Potter prepares some vessels for wrath, he doesn’t cause any vessels to sin, nor fails to enable any vessels to believe.

According to the unbiblical mixture of Greek philosophy and Roman Catholicism that is Aquinas, et. al., since God is uncaused, unchangeable, already knows everything, and can’t learn anything, then the only way he can know everything is to cause everything: Satan’s sin, Adam’s fall, the thoughts and actions of every rapist, child molester, Mao, Stalin and Hitler. Warfield said, God “opens and hardens the heart; and creates the very thoughts and intents of the soul.”⁵⁶ [*Warfield, Biblical Doctrines, 286-287.*]

In contrast, the Bible teaches God knows all things, permits some things, and causes some things; but that’s not Calvinism.

Calvin:

If God merely foresaw human events, and did not also arrange and dispose of them at his pleasure, there might be room for agitating the question, how far his foreknowledge amounts to necessity; but since he foresees the things which are to happen simply because he has decreed that they are so to happen, it is vain to debate about prescience, while it is clear that all events take place by his sovereign appointment.⁵⁶

[*Calvin, Institutes, Kindle 17761-17764.*]

Since Calvinism teaches God causes most people to sin so he can punish them for it eternally, it also teaches God doesn’t love everyone. Pink says the gospel isn’t good news to sinners, but good news about Jesus.

Pink:

First, it is of great importance that we should be clear upon the nature of the gospel itself. The gospel is God’s good news concerning Christ and not concerning sinners: ... “concerning his Son Jesus Christ.” ... His own blessed Son “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phi 2:8). ... In the gospel, God simply announces the terms upon which men may be saved

(namely, repentance and faith) and, indiscriminately, all are commanded to fulfill them.⁵⁶

[Pink, Does God Love Everyone, Kindle 163-173.]

Contrast Pink's matter-of-fact preaching of the gospel with Paul's, including the verses we are currently looking at in 9:2-3, which means Paul is more loving than Calvinism's god.

2 Cor. 5:20-21. Now then we are ambassadors for Messiah, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Messiah's stead, be reconciled to God. For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Rom. 10:1. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

Rom. 9:2-3. I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Why is Paul so concerned about his brethren who are accursed from Messiah? Because of their need, their plight, and the emergency of their perishing. It's not that Calvinists don't evangelize. They evangelize because God commands it. Pink concludes his book, *Does God Love Everyone* with this concept:

Pink:

We are bidden to preach the gospel to every creature. It is not for us to reason about the consistency between this and the fact that "few are chosen." It is for us to obey.⁷⁹

[Pink, Does God Love Everyone?, Kindle 186-187.]

Yes, that's evangelism, but at what level of sacrifice and urgency? Paul was willing to give the salvation of his soul, so he was certainly also willing to give his physical life, because of their need. "I could wish that myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren," Rom. 9:3. The church's outreach to the world would be

revolutionized if it could free itself of Calvinism and Reformed Theology.

God is “not willing that any [not ‘any kind’] would perish,” 2 Pet. 3:9, and is doing all he can righteously do to save all men, and Paul was on board with God’s plan and heart. Paul was concerned about everyone accursed from Messiah, especially his kinsman, and especially because Messiah “pertains” [vs. 4] to them. Now, some Calvinists do believe God loves all people.

Piper:

For “all men” the death of Christ is the foundation of the free offer of the gospel. This is the meaning of John 3:16, “God so loved the world.” ... I used to say to the church I served, “I love all the women of this church, but I love my wife in a very special way.” I would not want Noel to think that she is loved just because I love all women and she happens to be a woman. So it is with God and all the people of the world. There is a universal love for all, but there is a particular love that he has for the bride.⁸⁰

[Piper, Five Points, Kindle 452-453, 588-590.]

Sproul:

God deals with people differently. To be sure, God loves all mankind. He made us all, and we all bear his image. That love, however, does not preclude God from loving people in different ways.⁸¹

[Sproul. Almighty: The Sovereignty of God, Kindle 1424-1425.]

But I think Pink is more consistent with Calvinist doctrine.

What kind of love would it be to see someone you loved being stabbed in New York’s Central Park and not even call 911?

New York Times. On March 13, 1964, a 28-year-old woman named Catherine “Kitty” Genovese was raped and killed in two separate late-night attacks near her home in Kew Gardens, Queens. Police found that at least 38 people had seen the attacks or heard Genovese scream, but no one intervened and just one woman called the police. . In April 2010, a homeless man named Hugo Alfredo Tale-Yax died on a street in Queens after being stabbed while intervening in an argument. A number of people walked by him as he lay dying

on the street. The New York Times reported, “One man bent down to the sidewalk to shake the man, lifting him to reveal a pool of blood before walking away. Two men appeared to have a conversation about the situation, one pausing to take a photo of the body before departing. But the rest merely turned their heads toward the body, revealing some curiosity as they hurried along.”⁸²

[\[https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/13/march-13-1964-new-york-woman-killed-while-witnesses-do-nothing/\]](https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/13/march-13-1964-new-york-woman-killed-while-witnesses-do-nothing/)

What kind of love would be fully able to save a man from eternal suffering and yet fail to do so? But God’s love is constrained by his righteousness.

Rom. 9:4-5. Israel’s Messiah

Rom. 9:4-5. To whom pertains [1] the sonship, and [2] the [shekinah] glory, and [3] the covenants, and the giving of [4] the law, and [5] the service of God [in the temple], and [6] the promises; whose are [7] the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh [Jesus is still Jewish] [8] Messiah came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Calvinist Version. To the church pertains spiritual adoption; glorification; the secret covenants of works and grace; the law [wrong: “we are not under the law,” Rom. 6:15]; spiritual service, and God’s promises. We try to forget Messiah is Jewish.

This list contains 8 things pertaining to Israel in 4 groups of 2, but the eighth is different from the first seven. First group of two: [1] “The sonship” (9:4) created the nation when Israel followed the [2] shekinah “glory” (9:4) out of Egypt at the Exodus. Second group of two: The Abrahamic covenant was the basis of the four unconditional Jewish [3] “covenants” (9:4) - the Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenants - and the [4] “law” (9:4) is the one conditional Jewish covenant. Third group of two: The [5] temple “service” (9:4) represents all the nation performs to try to keep the law; while God performs the unconditional [6] “promises” (9:4) to the nation. Fourth group of two: [7] The “fathers” (9:5) are Abraham, Isaac,

Jacob, and his twelve sons who fathered the twelve tribes. To be a descendent of Jacob, through the male line, as part of one of the twelve tribes, is the Biblical definition of being Jewish.

All physical Israelites could participate in these first seven things without knowing God spiritually. An unbeliever, like Saul, could be king of Israel because he was a physical descendant of Judah. And an unbeliever, like Caiaphas, could be high priest because he was a physical descendant of Levi. But when [8] “Messiah” (9:5) arrived, only regenerate Israelites (and Gentiles) could follow him. That’s the change Paul is addressing in Romans 9-11. He’s answering the question, “Why doesn’t Israel acknowledge and follow their Messiah?”

Most people who left Egypt with Moses when Israel received “sonship” (9:4), and were led through the wilderness daily by “the [shekinah] glory” (9:4), and who received “the giving of the law” (9:4) at Sinai, were unsaved and unregenerate. That’s why there were so many rebellions and murmurings against God in the wilderness. Unregenerate men have a hard time living that close to God. So, it’s not new that most Jewish people, like most Gentile people, aren’t saved. The change is that when Israel’s Messiah came, God didn’t force them to follow him, as he forced them to follow Moses and the other prophets.

Every generation of Israel rejected the message of the prophets, but God always forced them to outwardly accept the prophets, often posthumously, after persecuting or killing them.

Matt. 23:29-31. You ... say if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore you are witnesses to yourselves, that you are the children of them which killed the prophets.

But God didn't coerce the nation into outwardly accepting the Messiah, either during his ministry or posthumously. In fact, he actively prevented them from doing so.

Theologians who say Romans 9 is about individual election to eternal salvation and damnation aren't explaining any change at all, since they think God always predestined the majority of all men, Jews and Gentiles, to unbelief. But there was a very significant change for Israel when Messiah came that Paul needed to explain. Israel "stumbled at that stumblingstone" (9:32, 33), of their own Messiah, and that's the topic of Romans 9-11.

Rom. 9:6. Israel's Call Hasn't Failed

Rom. 9:6a. Not as though the word of God [God's call] has taken no effect [or 'failed,' NIV].

In Romans 8, Paul had said our individual election to glorification is certain. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, ... called, ... justified, ... glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30), because nothing "will separate us from the love of Messiah" (Rom. 8:35). Now in Romans 9-11, Paul says Israel's national glorification is also certain, "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26); "the word of God has not failed" (9:6).

Romans 9 is about calling by the word. 1) Isaac's call to sonship, in verses 7-9, represents the Jewish minority's call to sonship. "In Isaac will your seed be called," Rom. 9:7. 2) Edom's call to destruction, in verses 10-13, represents the Jewish majority's call to destruction. "So that the purpose of God according to election might stand ... of him that calls, it was said, ... 'the elder [meaning Edom] will serve the younger [meaning Israel]," Rom. 9:11-12. 3) The Gentiles call to God, in verses 24-29, was also caused, predestined by prophecy. "As he says, ... 'I will call them my people, which were not my people,'" Rom. 9:25.

Verses 6-33 are structured as a series of questions, with each question being given a two-part answer, as shown in the following

table.

OUTLINE OF ROMANS 9:6-33 - CALLED BY THE WORD		
Rm 9:	People and Topic	The Call
6	Israel's Call Hasn't Failed	
7-9	Isaac's Call	In Isaac your seed will be <u>called</u>
10-13	Edom's Call	Purpose of God accord. to election ... of him that <u>calls</u> , it was <u>said</u>
14	Is God Unrighteous?	
15-16	Moses' Choice	For he <u>says</u> to Moses ...
17-18	Pharaoh's Choice	For the scripture <u>says</u> to Pharaoh ...
19-21	Can't the Potter Choose?	
22	Vessels Fitted to Destruction	
23	Vessels Prepared to Glory	
24	Are Even Some Gentiles Called?	
25-26	Gentiles Called	He <u>says</u> , ... I will <u>call</u> them my people ... <u>Called</u> the children of God
27-29	Israel Called	Isaiah also <u>cried</u> concerning Israel
30-31	What Did Israel Miss Out On?	
32-33	Why Didn't Israel Attain Righteousness?	

In Romans 9:6-29, “election” is mentioned in verse 11; “purpose” in 11 and 17; “calling” in 7, 11, 24, 25, and 26; “say” (as in call) in 12, 15, 17, 25, 26, 27, and 29; “word” in 6 and 9; and “glory” in 4 and 23. But just as “faith” isn’t mentioned in the Golden Chain of Romans 8:29-30, because faith isn’t a monergistic work of God caused by predestination; so also faith isn’t mentioned in Romans 9:6-29, because it’s not a monergistic work of God caused by predestination. Faith is mentioned in 9:30-33, though, as an explanation of what happened.

Calvinist doctrine can’t exist unless God predestines people to faith, and that’s precisely what the Bible never says is predestined. In Romans 8:29-30, predestined individuals are predestined “to be conformed to the image of his Son, ... and ... glorified,” not to faith. And in Romans 9:6-29, a minority of Israel, along with the elect Gentiles, are predestined to

“the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had before prepared to glory” (9:23), but not to faith; and the majority of Israel are predestined to destruction, not to unbelief.

Predestination is always through the word of God. “Not as though the word of God has taken no effect,” Rom. 9:6. Predestination is prophecy, which is creation through the authority of God’s word. God created light by saying, “Let there be light, and there was light” (Gen. 1:3). God calls future things into existence through prophecy. “God ... calls those things which are not as though they were,” Rom. 4:17. “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, . calling . the man that executes my counsel from a far country; yes, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass,” Is. 49:10-11.

God doesn’t need to send angels to cause things to happen. He can bring in conquerors from Assyria by having a prophet speak it. “Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth,” Hos. 6:5. God accomplished the exodus from Babylon, without the plagues he used in Egypt, by speaking Cyrus’ predestination 150 years in advance, to in turn, by his kingly authority, speak Jerusalem’s rebuilding into existence. “[The LORD] says of Cyrus, ‘He is my shepherd, and will perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, ‘You will be built;’ and to the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’ . He will let my captives go, not for price nor reward [unlike the contest in Egypt],” Is. 44:28, 45:13. God spoke each saved individual’s predestination to glorification when he wrote their names in the Lamb’s Book of Life before the foundation of the world.

Therefore, I disagree with Godet's conclusion as to Paul's teaching about the relationship between divine determinism and human free will in Romans 9.

Godet (Non-Calvinist):

The apostle in this chapter, far from vindicating, as is ordinarily thought, the rights of divine election over against human freedom, vindicates, on the contrary, the rights of God's freedom in regard to His own election relating to Israel. His decree does not bind Him, as an external law imposed on His will would.⁸³

[Godet, Romans, Kindle 10413-10415.]

On the contrary, God's decree does bind him. His faithfulness to what he has spoken requires his election of any person or nation to be as certain and un-cancellable as all his prophetic words. "I make known your faithfulness to all generations. Your faithfulness you will establish in the very heavens," Ps. 89:1-2. "Your faithfulness is to all generations," Ps. 119:90.

God said, "In the Lord will all the seed of Israel be justified, and will glory [be glorified]" (Is. 45:25). So how could Messiah come and Israel not accept him? It looks "as though the word of God has taken no effect" (Rom. 9:6a).

Rom. 9:6b. For they are not all [true] Israel [the nation], which are of Israel [Jacob, the person].

Or, an alternative translation, with the same meaning. οὐ γάρ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰσραήλ, For not all out of Israel [the person Jacob], οὗτοι Ἰσραήλ, these are [true] Israel [the nation].)

Physically speaking, they ARE all "Israel," the physical nation, that are "of Israel," the person Jacob. That's the definition of being Jewish: a physical descendent of Jacob. Not all Abraham's sons were Jewish. Ishmael fathered the Arabs, and Midian fathered the Midianites, for example.

And not all Isaac's sons were Jewish. Esau fathered the Edomites. But when you get to Jacob, God changed his name to "Israel," and all twelve of his sons and their physical descendants, the twelve tribes, are Jewish. But spiritually, the division between true Jew and Gentile continued even after Jacob, because not every Israelite is like "Nathanael, ... an Israelite indeed" (Jn. 1:47). The majority of Jews have always been spiritual Gentiles, and God will compare them to Edom, Pharaoh, and Sodom in this chapter.

Rom. 9:7-9. Isaac's Call

Isaac. Rom. 9:7-9. Neither, because they are the [physical] seed of Abraham, are they all [covenant] children; but, "In Isaac your seed will be called [κληθήσεται]." That is [application of the allegory], They which are the children of the flesh [natural born], these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise [miraculously born] are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, "At this time I will come, and Sarah will have a son."

Calvinist Version, Rom. 9:7-9. In Isaac your seed will be called to believe. They which are the children of the flesh, these can't believe.

Regarding the historical example, 'they are not all the seed of Abraham that are the seed of Abraham,' because Abraham had eight sons we know of: Ishmael by Hagar, Isaac by Sarah, and Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah by Keturah. All of them were "the [physical] seed of Abraham" (9:7), but only Isaac and his descendants were "counted for the seed" (9:8), God referred to when he gave Abraham and his "seed" the covenant and promises.

Gen. 17:6-8. I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you, and to your seed after you. And I will give to you, and to your seed after you, the land wherein you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

Several verses in Genesis demonstrate God chose Isaac to inherit the Abrahamic covenant, but Paul chose Genesis 21:12, because it

mentions the word ‘called,’ “In Isaac will your seed be called.” Isaac was miraculously born when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90-91, after having been barren all her marriage. God ‘called’ Isaac into existence by the power of his prophetic word of promise. The second verse Paul quoted is the actual “word of promise” (9:9) that called Isaac into existence. “At the appointed time, I will return to you, ... and Sarah will have a son,” Gen. 18:14.

In the historical situation, God didn’t exclude Ishmael or his descendants from faith or salvation, but only from national election. It would not be surprising to see Ishmael in the Messianic Kingdom. He is not mentioned by name when he is allegorized as a natural man in servitude to the law in the New Testament, “he who was of the bondwoman” (Gal. 4:3), etc. And the context of Gen. 21:12, quoted above, says some good things about Ishmael.

Gen. 21:12-13. In Isaac will your seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman I will make a nation, because he is your seed. **Gen. 17:20-21.** As for Ishmael, ... I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly, ... and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, which Sarah will bear to you at this set time in the next year.

Regarding the allegorical application, “they are not all [true] Israel [the nation] which are of Israel [Jacob, the person]” (9:6), because even within Jacob’s descendants, only-natural-born, “children of the flesh” (9:8), are not the super-naturally born “children of God” (9:8). Isaac represents those who are called to certain and sure justification, new birth, and glorification by having had their names written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. Isaac’s brothers represent the rest of Israel. In the parallel passage in Galatians 3-4, Paul says:

Gal. 4:23-28. He [Ishmael] who was of the bondwoman [Hagar] was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman [Sarah] was by promise. Which things are an allegory. ... For it is written, “Rejoice, you barren that bears not, ... for the desolate has [miraculously] many more children than she which has a husband.” Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

Not all Abraham's physical descendants could participate in the first seven things listed above: [1] the sonship, [2] the shekinah glory, [3] the covenants, [4] the law, [5] the temple service [6] the promises, and [7] the fathers, since Ishmael et. al. couldn't. But even though all Jacob's physical descendants could participate in those seven things, only those also called to be children of God by spiritual birth participate in [8] Messiah.

The calling in Romans 9:1-29 is to spiritual sonship, not to faith. "In Isaac will your seed be called ... the children of God" (9:7-8), not "In Isaac will your seed be called ... to believe." Faith is not mentioned in Romans 9:1-29 because the passage is about election, and election is not to faith. But the parallel passage in Galatians says we become sons of God by faith, "you are all the children of God by faith in Messiah" (Gal. 3:26). The Galatians passage also mentions the link between justification by faith and predestined justification; God's foreknowledge of all who will be in Messiah.

Gal. 3:26-29. You are all the children of God by faith [regeneration by faith, not faith by regeneration] in Messiah Jesus. Because as many of you as have been baptized ["by one spirit are we all baptized into one body," 1 Cor. 12:13] into Messiah [union] have put on Messiah [union]. ... You are all one in Messiah Jesus [union]. And if you are Messiah's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise [union to predestination to glorification].

The word of God hasn't failed, but rather has been established, since all the true seed, the children of God, are called, and follow Messiah.

Rom. 9:10-13. Edom's Call

Edom. Rom. 9:10-13. And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election [εκλογήν, eklogyn] might stand, not of works, but of him that calls [καλούντος, kalountos]; it was said to her, "The elder will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

Regarding the historical example, ‘they are not all counted as the seed of Isaac that are the seed of Isaac,’ because Israel and Edom have different destinies. Paul quotes two verses from the Old Testament. The first, “the elder will serve the younger” (9:12), called the nation of Edom into subordination to the nation of Israel.

Gen. 25:23. Two nations are in your womb, and two manner of people will be separated from your bowels; and the one people will be stronger than the other people; and the elder will serve the younger.

Israel is predestined to rule over all other nations in the coming Messianic Kingdom.

Deut. 28:13. The Lord will make you the head, and not the tail; and you will be above only, and you will not be beneath.

Is. 60:12. The nation and kingdom that will not serve you will perish.

And Edom also is predestined to be subordinate. “The elder will serve the younger,” Gen. 25:23.

The second scripture Paul quoted, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” (9:13), was spoken by Malachi about 1500 years after Esau and Jacob’s birth. It shows God predestined the nation of Edom to perpetual national destruction during the Messianic Kingdom.

Mal. 1:2-4. “Was not Esau Jacob's brother?” says the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste, ... and they will call them, ... the people against whom the Lord has indignation for ever.

The exclusion of Edom from the Messianic Kingdom is a major theme of the Old Testament. The whole book of Obadiah is about it, for example. “There will not be any remaining of the house of Esau, . and the kingdom will be the Lord's,” Obad.1:18-21. While most nations are enjoying the Messianic Kingdom, the land of Edom will be like Sodom and Gomorrah, a perpetual object lesson of judgment.

Is. 34:5-10. My sword ... will come down on Idumea [the Greek name for Edom], and on the people of my curse. . The streams thereof will be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof will become burning pitch. It will not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof will go up for ever; from generation to generation it will lie waste; none will pass through it for ever and ever.

When God chose Edom to destruction, it didn't mean every Edomite will die a violent death, but that everyone, including any descendants of Esau, in Edom (southern Jordan today), when Messiah returns to set up the kingdom, will die. See "Appendix 1. Messiah's Return and Edom's Destruction" for more information about the future fulfillment of these prophecies.

God can deal differently with nations and groups in the physical realm, than he does with individuals in the spiritual realm. God never allows a person to have spiritual salvation because of the faith of their parents or of someone else, and he never condemns a person spiritually because of the unbelief of someone else. But God sometimes allowed disobedient Israelites to share in the physical blessings of the nation, and sometimes allowed obedient Israelites to share in the physical punishments of the nation, like when Jeremiah was forcibly taken to Egypt by the disobedient survivors of the Babylonian conquest and died there (Jer. 40-44).

Edom was predestined to physical destruction, not to unbelief or eternal damnation. Herod and his sons, who were rulers over Israel while Jesus' was there, were Edomites, who had been raised as Jewish proselytes. You might have some Edomite genes in you. But God would never give a nation of people spiritual salvation or spiritual damnation as a group. If any Calvinist thinks Esau and his descendants were predestined to spiritual destruction, he should get a DNA test to make sure he has no Edomite blood.

Regarding the application of the allegory, "they are not all [true] Israel [the nation] that are of Israel [the person Jacob]" (Rom. 9:6), because the minority and the majority in the Israel of Paul's day had

different destinies. The majority was called to destruction, like Edom. Before Messiah came, the nation of Israel had the role of prophet to the world and stewardship of the scriptures. But after Messiah came, Israel's role was national blindness, so the gospel would go out to the Gentiles.

Not all election is to spiritual justification and glorification, like Isaac and the saved Israelites he represented, and like us in Romans 8. Some election is to service, like Cyrus, discussed earlier, who was elected to release Israel from Persia; and like Paul, who was elected to be an apostle. "Paul, an apostle, ... by ... God, ... who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace," Gal. 1:1, 15. And some of those God knows will never be in Messiah, he elects to accomplish undesirable tasks, like Edom to future physical destruction and the majority of the Israel to stumbling over Messiah.

God's choosing of saved and unsaved to special tasks is not based on merit. God choose Jacob's descendants to be physically exalted and Esau's descendants to be physically brought low before they had done anything. "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calls, it was said .," Rom. 9:11. Likewise, when God chose Paul to be an apostle, he chose him according to grace, not merit.

1 Cor. 15:9-10. I am the least of the apostles, that am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed on me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

The reason God predestines anything is to ensure its fulfillment. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand," Rom. 9:11. Since God called Paul to be an apostle, it was impossible that Paul would fail to accomplish his mission. "Apostle" is the

transliteration of the Greek word meaning “representative,” so for Paul to fail would be for God to fail.

Predestination to spiritual salvation is always based on foreknowledge of those in the eternal Messiah. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,” 1 Pet. 1:2. “Rufus, chosen in the Lord,” Rom. 16:13.

Predestination of saved or unsaved people to special tasks of service also relies on a combination of foreknowledge and predetermination to ensure God’s will is accomplished. Although Paul didn’t deserve to be chosen as an apostle, God’s choice of him to be the apostle to the Gentiles probably took into account his foreknowledge of Paul’s fitness for the task.

God may have chosen Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles, from among everyone else he foreknew in Messiah, because he knew Paul would be raised as a religiously-trained Jew, and as a Roman citizen, in a Gentile country, and because of his personal characteristics. Or he may have providentially caused Paul to be born as a Jewish Roman citizen in Tarsus to prepare him for the task.

Paul started this subsection with, “Not as though the word of God has taken no effect” (9:6). Then he showed in verses 7-9 that the word hasn’t failed, because true Israelites are the ones supernaturally called to be the children of God, like Isaac. And he ended in verses 10-13 by saying the majority of the Israel of Paul’s day was called to the 70 AD. destruction, like Edom; and to alienation from Messiah “that the purpose of God according to election might stand” (9:11). Rather than Israel’s rejection of Messiah indicating any failure of “the word of God” (9:6), it established the word of God, because that’s precisely what was predestined through prophesy, and called into existence by “him that calls” (9:11).

Rom. 9:14. Is God Unrighteous?

Rom. 9:14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?
God forbid.

Did God's predestination of Edom to destruction in the Messianic Kingdom, and of Israel to the 70 AD destruction and national rejection of Messiah cause them to sin? Or, even worse, does God predestinate people to sin and unbelief so he can punish them forever, as Calvinism interprets this passage? "God forbid" (9:14). Either of those cases would be unrighteous. Even unregenerate men understand it's wrong to punish someone for things beyond their control. There's no responsibility, without ability.

Paul will defend God's predestining some saved people to special tasks through the example of Moses; and then he will defend God's predestining some unsaved people to special tasks through the example of Pharaoh. And in both cases, God's predestination was limited to only part of what happened. There was still plenty of leeway for people to make choices within boundaries of their predestination.

Rom. 9:15-16. Moses' Choice

Moses. Rom. 9:15-16. For he said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." So then, it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy.

Notice there's no mention of Moses being elected or called to anything in verses 15 and 16. Some things God accomplishes by calling, like by calling Moses' to lead Israel out of Egypt; and some things he accomplishes through the foreknown decisions of men, like Moses asking and receiving the privilege of previewing our glorification. Paul's quote in vs. 15 is from Exodus 33.

Exodus 33:18-19. [Moses] said, "I beseech you, show me your glory." And [the LORD] said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

The context is that while Moses was on the mountain receiving the first copy of the ten commandments, Israel made and worshipped an idol. The people had seen the ten plagues in Egypt, had been led day and night by the pillar of fire, had crossed on dry land between two walls of water, had seen the mightiest army in the world destroyed without having to fight, were receiving daily manna from heaven, had experienced the burning, quaking, thundering, and the voice of God at Mt. Sinai, and they couldn't wait 40 days for Moses to come back down the mountain.

While Moses was still on the mountain, God told him what the people were doing, and said, "Let me alone, that ... I may consume them, and I will make of you a great nation." God could have destroyed the majority of Israel without breaking his covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because he could have made a nation of Moses, since Moses was a descendant of Jacob. (He couldn't have given Jacob's promises to a Gentile and still be faithful.) Of course, it would delay things. And there was no guarantee Moses' descendants would be any better. After all, Cain, the first man ever born, was a murderer. But Moses effectually interceded for the people.

Moses went down to the camp, angrily broke the two tablets when he saw the naked people dancing around the idol, ground up the idol and made the people drink it mixed with water, and commanded the men to slay each other. The tribe of Levi obeyed and slew three thousand men.

Ex. 32:31-35. Moses returned to the Lord, and said, ... "If you will, forgive their sin - and if not, blot me, I pray you, out of your book which you have written." And the Lord said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." . And the Lord plagued the people because they made the calf.

Moses sounds very much like Paul in Romans 9. "I could wish that myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen

according to the flesh,” Rom. 9:3. Moses and Paul are more loving than Calvinism’s god.

God had been leading Israel daily and intimately in the shekinah glory cloud. But now God threatened to go on ahead to Canaan and wait for them there rather than travel with them. But Moses reminded God that he had promised to be gracious to Moses himself. So God first promised to go with Moses, and then also with the people.

Ex. 33:12-17. Moses said to the Lord, ... “You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in my sight.’ Now therefore, I pray you, if I have found grace in your sight, show me now your way, that I may know you, that I may find grace in your sight. And consider that this nation is your people.” And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest. And he said to him, “If your presence go not with me, carry us not up there. For whereby will it be known here that I and your people have found grace in your sight? Is it not in that you go with us? So will we be separated, I and your people, from all the people that are on the face of the earth.” And the Lord said to Moses, “I will do this thing also that you have spoken; for you have found grace in my sight, and I know you by name.”

Num. 12:3. Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.

But Moses didn’t act meekly when he interceded for Israel. He was like Abraham persisting in intercession for Lot in Sodom, and like Jacob’s persistence in praying for blessing when he wrestled with the Angel of the LORD.

Gen. 18:23-32. Abraham drew near, and said, ... “Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city. That be far from you . to slay the righteous with the wicked. . Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? . Behold now, I have taken on me to speak to the Lord, which am but dust and ashes. Peradventure there will lack five of the fifty? ... Forty? ... Oh, let not the Lord be angry! ... Thirty? ... Twenty? ... Ten?” ... And he said, “I will not destroy it for ten's sake.”

Gen. 32:24-30. Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. . And [the man] said, “Let me go, for the day breaks.” And [Jacob] said, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me.” . And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face [and wrestled with him], and my life is preserved.

If I were in Moses’ place after I received my request for God to continue to travel with Israel, I would have said, “Thank you,” and ceased asking. But Moses went on to the height of Jewish chutzpah, and the height of faith, and God said yes again.

Ex. 33:18-19 And [Moses] said, “I beseech you, show me your glory. And [the Lord] said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

God had made no promise to Abraham that he would show Moses his glory, yet God granted Moses’ immense request. God wasn’t obligated to do it; it was an act of the highest, undeserved grace. He did it because it’s in harmony with his nature, and it pleased him, and he thought it a good thing. But He also did it because Moses asked.

The willing of men is essential, but that doesn’t mean men deserve what God grants them. The grace of God is essential also. It wouldn’t have happened if Moses hadn’t asked, and it wouldn’t have happened if God hadn’t been gracious. As the gift provider, God receives all the glory for the gifts he provides. “So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy,” Rom. 9:16.

When God predestines, as he did when he called Moses to service in leading his people, there is still a lot of room for men to act freely as to how they fulfill that service. God didn’t choose Isaac to inherit the covenant because Isaac deserved grace. But foreknowledge is always involved in predestination so God can accomplish his purposes within the boundaries of the free choices of men.

And it doesn't mean Isaac merited being chosen because God based his choice partly on things he foreknew about Isaac that made him want to choose him over Ishmael. God had some constraints on his choice, because he had to choose a son of Abraham, to fulfill his promise. And God wouldn't have chosen Isaac if he hadn't foreknown him in the book of life. Isaac was not only called to miraculous physical and spiritual birth, but he was also called to service as one of the patriarchs, and this position was only open to saved men.

Likewise, Moses' position of service was only open to saved men, and then Moses had immense freedom in working out that service. The main thing that was predestined was his success in accomplishing his task. His preview of our glorification was not predestined.

God makes salvation available to all who accept it, and then by the persistent influence of his Holy Spirit, he causes our sanctification, that we will all have at least thirtyfold fruit, but it is due to our own choices and chutzpah in trusting and obeying God that some have sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold.

Also, events like Moses' calling at the burning bush (Ex. 3:11; 4:10, 13-18) show it doesn't make sense for God to cause all things, even sin, as Calvinism teaches.

Ex. 4:10-16. Moses said to the Lord, "O my Lord, ... I'm slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? ... I will be with your mouth, and teach you what you will say. And he said, "O my Lord, send, I pray you, by the hand of him whom you will send [i.e. somebody else]." And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, "Isn't Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he comes forth to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart ... And he will be your spokesman to the people.

Why would God cause Moses to resist his call, so He would get angry with Moses, so He would add Aaron to the equation, and then

cause Aaron to come and be happy to see Moses, rather than just starting with Moses and Aaron? It would be a very lonely universe for God, as it were, if God controlled everything, and played all the parts in a puppet show, and had no genuine relationships.

Ex. 33:20-23. And he said, “You cannot see my face; for there will no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, ... “While my glory passes by, ... I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and will cover you with my hand while I pass by. And I will take away my hand, and you will see my back parts, but my face will not be seen.”

It's interesting Moses pleaded, “show me your glory” (Ex. 33:18), when he saw God's shekinah glory every day, and talked with God's glory on the mountain, and at the door of the tabernacle. And it's interesting God said no one could see his face, when as we read above, Jacob said “I have seen God face to face,” and, “the Lord talked with Moses . face to face, as a man speaks to his friend,” Ex. 33:9-11.

But talking to the shekinah glory is not the same thing as talking directly to the Angel of the LORD. The Angel of the LORD has the appearance of an angel, and of a man, because angels look like men (most angels don't have wings), and the Angel of the LORD sat atop the shekinah glory.

Ez. 1:26-28. Above the firmament that was over [the cherubs] heads was the likeness of a throne, ... and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above on it, . from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire. . This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.

The Angel of the LORD had the ability to leave the shekinah glory, as he did when he bargained with Abraham, and wrestled with Jacob, and became flesh, and received gifts from the wise men of the east. “The star which they saw in the east, . came and stood over where the young child was,” Matt. 2:9. Stars can't stand over individual houses, but the shekinah glory, containing the four

cherubim and their wheels (Ezek. 1), but without the Angel of the LORD did, when the Angel of the LORD, the Word, became flesh.

When Abraham and Jacob talked with the Angel of the LORD, he had his glory hidden. So, Moses was the first person to see the Angel of the Lord with his glory, but he only got to see his back. Moses didn't get to see his glorified face until ...

Matt. 17:1-3. Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. And his face shone as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with him.

Moses didn't see the back of the Father's glory because, "No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him" (Jn. 1:18).

Ex. 34:1-4. And the Lord said to Moses, "Hew two tables of stone like the first, and I will write on these tables the words that were in the first tables, which you broke And come up in the morning to mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me in the top of the mount. ... And Moses ... went up to mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him.

God had probably been talking with Moses at the door of the tabernacle when he said he would let Moses' see his glory, but then told Moses to go up the mountain to see this preview of Jesus' transfiguration on the mountain.

Ex. 34:5-10. And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, to the third and to the fourth generation." And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. And he said, "If now I have found grace in your sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray you, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and

our sin, and take us for your inheritance.” And he said, “Behold, I make a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation. And all the people among which you are will see the work of the Lord; for it is a terrible thing that I will do with you.

Previewing Jesus’ glorification was outside the range of what God had predestined for Moses, but within the range of what was permitted and graciously granted based on Moses’ free choices. Moses didn’t only preview Messiah’s glorification, but he even previewed our glorification.

Ex. 34:29-30. When Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables, ... Moses didn’t know that the skin of his face shone. ... And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone.

Moses represents the saved Israelites, like Paul, who will one day share in Messiah’s glory. God has not only mercifully restored Adam’s lost righteousness through redemption in Messiah, but because of the way he accomplished our redemption, by putting us into Messiah, he has also super-graciously destined us to partake of his own glory. “O Father, glorify you me with your own self with the glory which I had with you before the world was. . The glory which you gave me, I have given them,” Jn. 17:5, 22.

Since God called Paul to be an apostle, it was impossible Paul would fail to accomplish his mission as an apostle. But Paul had a wide range of freedom in how he fulfilled his office. Whatever God causes men to do, they get no eternal punishment or reward for, contrary to what Calvinism teaches. It’s only what men do with what God has given them that determines eternal reward and punishment.

So, Paul did secular work to support himself financially, because he knew he would not get rewarded for preaching the gospel, since as an apostle, he had no choice about that. “Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid on me. ... If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will [I’ll

still do it], a dispensing of the gospel is committed to me [anyway, but I'll be caused to do it]. What is my reward then? Truly that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Messiah without charge," 1 Cor. 9:16-18. Even though Paul had a right to receive regular financial support (1 Tim. 5:18) he didn't use this right to avoid hindering the gospel, and for that he will receive reward. But not for preaching the gospel which God's calling caused him to preach.

Rom. 9:17-18. Pharaoh's Choice

So, we saw how the will of God and of man interacted in regards to Moses receiving an outlandish act of grace. But the objection, "Is there unrighteousness with God" (Rom. 9:14), was not raised about Isaac and the minority of Israel receiving good from God, but about Edom and the majority of Israel being called to physical suffering and alienation from Messianic blessings. So, to defend God's righteousness in this regard, Paul turns to what happened a few months before Moses saw Jesus' glory, the account of Pharaoh and the Exodus from Egypt.

Pharaoh. Rom. 9:17-18. For the scripture said to Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose I raised you up, so that I can show my power in you, and so that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Therefore he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he hardens whom he will.

Notice there 's no mention of election or calling of Pharaoh to be hardened or to believe, or to be drowned in the Red Sea. Pharaoh was only predestined to be "raised ... up" (vs. 17) to be Pharaoh, so that, one way or another, God could "show my power in you, and so that my name can be declared throughout all the earth" (vs. 17).

There were several ways God's purpose could have been accomplished with Pharaoh, depending on Pharaoh's choices. Of course, God foreknew how it would all play out, but God gave Pharaoh genuine choices, and didn't directly or indirectly cause any of Pharaoh's decisions, until he started to harden Pharaoh's heart

after the seventh plague, so Pharaoh would hang in there through all ten plagues.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

Earlier in this book, we theorized about different ways the Exodus could have taken place. We called them Exodus Plan A, Plan B and Plan C. The Exodus that actually came to pass—that was what we eventually called Plan C. It involved the violent destruction of a recalcitrant Egypt and the complete defeat of a bullheaded Pharaoh. But Exodus Plan C didn't have to happen. It was a last resort, as it were, which came about because Pharaoh consistently refused to act in good faith. Pharaoh certainly could have chosen differently.⁸⁴

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 2802-2805.]

Not only was Pharaoh's heart not hardened by God until after the seventh plague, but also his heart was never hardened against believing God for spiritual salvation, but against letting Israel go. "I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go," Ex. 4:21, also Ex. 7:13-14; 9:7, 35; 10:20, 27; 11:10, as shown in the chart later in this section.

And the consequences Pharaoh faced were physical, not spiritual. God hardened other hearts also, but not to cause them to suffer spiritual damnation, but rather to suffer physical death. "Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him, for the Lord your God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, so that he would deliver him into your hand, ... so that you would inherit his land," Deut. 2:30-31. "There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, ... for it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, so that they would come against Israel in battle, so that he would destroy them utterly [physically, not spiritually]," Josh. 11:19-20.

Calvinists interpret the verses about Pharaoh unbiblically, as if they said, "I will harden his heart, so he can't believe." Also, if Calvinism's view of total depravity were true, God wouldn't have to harden Pharaoh's heart to keep him from believing. But actually, God hardened his heart from giving in before God could complete all ten plagues.

God wanted to complete all ten plagues for several reasons. 1) For God's glory: "I will be honored on Pharaoh, and on all his host," Ex. 14:2. 2) For Israel's sake: "I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, so that ... you can tell in the ears of your son, and of your son's son, what things I worked in Egypt, ... so that you may know that I am the Lord," Ex. 10:1-2. 3) For Egypt's sake: "Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that I may lay my hand on Egypt, . and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord," Ex. 7:4-5. 4) And for the whole world's sake: "I will at this time send all my plagues on your heart, . and indeed for this very cause have I raised you up, . that my name may be declared throughout all the earth," Ex. 9:14-16.

Thus, many years after the Exodus, the Philistines were able to say ...

1 Sam. 4:8, 6:6. Woe to us! ... These are the gods that struck the Egyptians with all the plagues. . Why then do you harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts?

In the contest between Moses and Pharaoh, two different Hebrew words are translated as "harden" in the KJV. 'Chazak [חָזַק],' meaning 'strengthen,' referring to giving courage and resolve; and 'kabad [כָּבַד],' meaning 'harden,' referring to moral stubbornness. I'm indebted to Rabbi David Fohrman for his insights into the Exodus narrative.⁸⁵ [Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1174.]

Whenever a sign or plague could be interpreted as the work of magic or of a polytheistic god, Pharaoh strengthened his heart for the battle, since Pharaoh was also considered a god. But whenever the sign or plague was indisputably the work of the God, the creator, above all (so-called) gods, Pharaoh morally hardened his heart against the evidence.⁸⁶

[86 Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1398-1406, 1424-1432, 1489-1501, 1598-1651.]

The moral hardening happened: 1) After Aaron's snake ate the magicians' snakes; 2) After God precisely controlled the timing of the ending of the frogs plague, which would be difficult for

polytheistic gods to do, since other gods might hinder them; 3) After God precisely controlled the geographic extent of the flies by excluding them from Goshen, which again would be difficult for polytheistic gods to do, and, 4) After the hail-encased fire, since there could hardly be an alliance between the fire and ice gods.

As most commentators point out, Pharaoh hardened his own heart before God hardened his heart. The KJV makes it seem like God hardened Pharaoh's heart right away after the miracle of the snakes. "Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, ... and it became a serpent, ... and he hardened Pharaoh's heart," Ex. 7:10-13. But the ASV says only, "and Pharaoh's heart was hardened," Ex. 7:13.

God knew in advance he would eventually strengthen Pharaoh's heart.

Ex. 4:21. When you go to return into Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh, . but I will harden [ꜥꜣꜥ, strengthen] his heart, so that he will not let the people go.

But the first time God actually strengthened Pharaoh's heart was after the sixth plague of boils.

Ex. 9:12. The Lord hardened [ꜥꜣꜥ, strengthened] the heart of Pharaoh.

Some commentators say God didn't actively harden Pharaoh's heart, but just left him to his own devices, like he did mankind in Romans 1.

Rom. 1:24-28. God gave them up. ... God gave them up. . God gave them over.

But the Exodus account says God actively hardened Pharaoh's heart.

After Moses requested Pharaoh to release Israel, and provided proof he spoke for God, Pharaoh should have:

1) Feared the Lord. Ex. 9:30. I know that you will not yet fear the Lord God.

2) Stopped sinning. Ex. 9:34. When Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more.

3) Humbled himself. Ex. 10:3. How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me?

4) Honored the Lord. Ex. 14:4. I will be honored upon Pharaoh.

And, 5) Believed God sent Moses. Ex. 14:31. Israel saw that great work which the Lord did on the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.

But Pharaoh's responses were always half-hearted, as shown in the table below. If Pharaoh were ever genuinely sorry, he wouldn't have kept trying to bargain with God. He was only sorry he had to go through punishment, so God strengthened his heart to continue to do what he really wanted to do, despite the pain.

PHARAOH'S RESPONSES TO THE TEN PLAGUES		
Plague	Pharaoh's Acknowledgments of God	Pharaoh's Half-Hearted Hardened Heart About Letting Israel Go
I will harden חזק, strengthen] his heart, that he will not let the people go. 4:21. ... I will harden [קשה] Pharaoh's heart, and ... Pharaoh will not listen to you [to let them go]. 7:3-4.		
Snake 7:12 First stubborn hardening		Pharaoh's heart was hardened [חזק, strengthd.], [ASV]. ... Pharaoh's heart is HARDENED [כבד], he refuses to let the people go. 7:13-14
1) Blood 7:20	NEITHER DID [Pharaoh] SET HIS HEART TO THIS also. 7:23	Pharaoh's heart was hardened [חזק, strengthened], neither did he listen [to let them go]. 7:22
2) Frogs 8:6 First chronological precision	Take away the frogs. ... And Moses said, ... When? ... And he said, TOMORROW. 8:8-10	When Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he HARDENED [כבד] his heart, and listened not [to let them go]. 8:15
3) Lice 8:17 First magicians couldn't replicate		Pharaoh's heart was hardened [חזק, strengthd.], and he listened not [to let them go]. 8:19

4) Flies 8:24 First geographical precision	Sacrifice to your God in the land; ... in the wilderness; only you shall NOT GO VERY FAR away. 8:25-28	Pharaoh HARDENED [בבד] his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go. 8:32
5) Cattle 9:6		The heart of Pharaoh was HARDENED [בבד], and he did not let the people go. 9:7
6) Boils 9:10 First time <u>God</u> strengthd.		The Lord hardened [חזק , strengthened] the heart of Pharaoh, and he listened not to them [to let them go]. 9:12

PHARAOH'S RESPONSES TO THE TEN PLAGUES (CONT.)		
Plague	Pharaoh's Half-Hearted Acknowledgments of God	Pharaoh's Hardened Heart Re. Letting Israel Go
7) Fire-Hail 9:23 First time sin mentioned and God <u>hardened</u>	I will at this time send all my plagues on your heart, 9:14. I have sinned THIS TIME. ... Intreat the Lord (for IT IS ENOUGH) that there be no more ... hail. 9:27-28. ... But who are they that shall go?... YOU THAT ARE MEN. And THEY WERE DRIVEN OUT from [his] presence. 10:8-11	He sinned yet more, and HARDENED [בבד] his heart, he and his servants. And [his] heart was hardened [חזק , strengthened], neither would he let ... Israel go. 9:34-35. I have HARDENED [בבד] his heart, and ... of his servants, so I can show ... my signs. 10:1
8) Locusts 10:13	I have sinned against ... your God, and ... you. ... Forgive, ... my sin ONLY THIS ONCE, ... so that he may take away ... THIS DEATH ONLY. 10:16-17	The Lord hardened [חזק , strengthened] Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go. 10:20
9) Darkness 10:22	Go you, serve the Lord; ONLY LET ... YOUR HERDS BE LEFT BEHIND: let your little ones also go with you. 10:24	The Lord hardened [חזק , strengthd.] Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. 10:27. The Lord hardened [חזק] Pharaoh's heart, so he would not let ... Israel go. 11:10
10) Firstborn 10:29 Israelites not auto. shielded	Go, serve the Lord, as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, ... AND BE GONE; and bless me also. 12:31-32	
Encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say ... they are entangled in the land. ... And I will harden [חזק , strengthen] Pharaoh's heart, so he will follow; ... and I will be honored on Pharaoh, and on all his host; so the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord. 14:2-4. And the Lord hardened [חזק , strengthd.] the heart of Pharaoh, ... and he pursued after. 14:8. I will harden [חזק , strengthen] the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will follow them; and I will get me honor on Pharaoh, and on all his host. 14:17		

As the plagues progressed, it became obvious that letting Israel go was the only sensible thing to do.

Gen. 10:7. Pharaoh's servants said to him, “Let the men go, so that they can serve the Lord their God. Don’t you yet know that Egypt is destroyed?”

If God had allowed him, Pharaoh would have done what his servants advised, and what the unbelieving Israelites did; he would

have given in to avoid the pain, even though he didn't genuinely acknowledge God's authority.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

As the sheer force of the plagues increased, it was always possible that a given plague would simply prove to be too much for the Egyptian king. The plague's force might compel Pharaoh to throw in the towel not out of conviction but out of mere expediency. That is, Pharaoh might still hold fast to his convictions, to his right ... to oppress and enslave Israel. ... Nevertheless, he might give in simply because he ... lacked the mental toughness and resolve to continue the struggle. . God, however, did not wish the Egyptian king to capitulate out of mere expediency. If it was courage that Pharaoh was lacking—well, God would supply him with the courage.⁸⁷

[87 Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1527-1534.]

God strengthened Pharaoh's heart so he wouldn't give in insincerely, so God could accomplish his purposes in manifesting his power. Pharaoh reached a point of no return when he changed his mind about acknowledging God after the seventh plague, and so God began to strengthen his heart - not against believing - but about letting Israel go, and Pharaoh eventually ended up drowned in the Red Sea.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

What happens if Pharaoh's stubbornness becomes so great that it reaches a point of no return? . The great turning point in the plagues was the seventh plague, hail. . How else are we to understand these words, which Moses is instructed to deliver to Pharaoh: ... "This time, I will send all My plagues into your heart" [Ex. 9:].⁸⁸

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1190, 1540-1544.]

It's here, at the climactic turning point, that the verse Paul quotes appears.

Ex. 9:14-16. I will at this time send all my plagues on your heart, . and in very deed for this cause I have raised you up, to show my power in you, and so that my name can be declared throughout all the earth.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

It's as if God is addressing an unspoken question troubling the careful reader. Why has God bothered to prop Pharaoh up, to allow him to continue to oppose Him? . The Almighty Himself seems to pause, and in a brief moment of stillness before the storm, addresses this very question to Pharaoh: Let's get real, Pharaoh. Haven't you been wondering about this? Why do you think you're still alive? . There is a reason, . larger than [you], . the revelation of the Creator to humankind. . Despite your evil oppression of the Israelites, you can still play a constructive role here. But if you choose not to play it, there are other ways My ends can be achieved.⁸⁹

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1563-1571.]

Points of no return in the Bible that resulted in physical judgment include:

- 1) Pharaoh's refusal to let Israel go (Ex. 9:34-35; 10:1; 14:28).
- 2) Israel's refusal to enter Canaan (14:40-45; Jude 1:5).
- 3) King Manasseh's sins before the Babylon Captivity (2 Kgs. 23:25-27).

4) Jesus' generation of Israel's refusal to accept the Messiah (Matt. 12:39-42; Luke 19:44; 21:24; Jn. 12:39-40; Rom. 9:32-33).

5) Stubborn people who are sometimes judged with physical death (Prov. 29:1).

I don't include a Christian's "sin unto death" (1 Jn. 5:16) because it can be forgiven.

James 5:14. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, ... and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

And points of no return in the Bible that resulted in spiritual judgment, like no further chance to be saved include:

- 1) Satan's fall with his demons (2 Pet. 2:4).
- 2) Some Pharisees who attributed Messiah's miracles to Satan (Matt. 12:31-32).
- 3) People who take the mark of the beast during tribulation period (Rev. 13:11-16; 14:9-10; 2 Thess. 2:11-12).
- 4) Everyone who dies physically (Heb. 9:27; Rev. 22:11).

And there's one point of no return that results in irrevocable eternal life:

- 1) The point of justification by faith for all who believe (Jn. 5:24).

Pharaoh had plenty of evidence and opportunities to acknowledge God and release Israel before God strengthened his heart to persevere in his rebellion. And Israel had plenty of evidence and opportunity to acknowledge Jesus as Messiah before the point of no return was reached in Matthew 11 and 12, and the hardening began in Matthew 13.

Yeshua accomplished the judicial hardening of those who rejected his ministry the same way Moses accomplished the hardening of Pharaoh's heart; by the words he chose to use. After the rejection, Jesus spoke in parables so the people wouldn't understand him.

Matt. 12:13-14. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because ... in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, “Hearing you will hear, and will not understand; and seeing you will see, and will not perceive.”

Jesus also intentionally said things in ways that would scandalize the people.

Jn. 6:53, 56. Jesus said to them ... , “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. . From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

And Moses hardened Pharaoh by the words he chose, which God knew would enflame Pharaoh’s pride. After the amazing hail-encased fire, Pharaoh admitted his sin for the first time, though half-heartedly.

Ex. 9:27-28. I have sinned this time.... I will let you go.

But after ...

Ex. 9:34. Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased.

He went against his conscience, and didn’t let Israel go. So, Moses replied ...

Ex. 10:3. How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me?

“Humble” there, is the same word in Hebrew, “ענה[anah],” that refers to being enslaved.

Ex. 1:11. They set over them taskmasters to afflict [ענה] them.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

Why would you want to antagonize the Egyptian leader? You think Pharaoh is going to give in to you when you talk like that? Of course he won't! But maybe that's the whole point.⁹⁰

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1730-1731.]

After some additional pressure from within his administration, Pharaoh would have let Israel go if he could have worked out a little face-saving compromise.

Ex. 10:8. Go! ... But who are they that shall go?

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

At this point, ... two hundred and ten years of slavery can come to an end. . All you have to do is say something like this: I don't know, Pharaoh, exactly who is going. Maybe we can leave behind some cattle or something. Would that work for you? . And Moses said: With our young and our old we will go. With our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and our cattle. . (Exodus 10:9). Moses's reply seems tone-deaf. We're taking everybody, Pharaoh—even Sally's pet sheep, and Bobby's lizard.”⁹¹

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1781-1783.]

Today, the Jewish people as a whole can't accept Yeshua as Messiah, because they would also have to stop believing they need to keep the law to be saved, and they would have to reject the previous generations of rabbinic teachings that rejected Yeshua.

If, at any point, Pharaoh had genuinely acknowledged God's authority, God would have stopped the plagues. If Moses' Pharaoh had willingly provided an escort out of Egypt for Israel, as Joseph's Pharaoh did, it would have accomplished the same goal for God's name to be made known to the world.

Gen. 50:4-11. Joseph spoke, ... “Let me go up ... and bury my father, and I will come again.” And Pharaoh said, “Go up.” . And . with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, ... and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren.

... Only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great company. And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, ... and they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation ... seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw ... they said, “This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians.”

All of the Egyptian army escorting Israel to Canaan would have made God’s name known to all the world of that time. But since Pharaoh and his armies did not accompany Israel out of Egypt willingly, God brought them out as an unwilling escort.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

If Pharaoh and Egypt will not be willing participants in the revelation of the Creator, then they will be unwilling participants in that drama. God would prefer that this revelation come about through Egypt’s free-willed recognition, . but if not, it will come about through their destruction.

One way or the other, the slaves will be freed and the world will learn that there is a Creator. And one way or the other, Pharaoh and Egypt will be the vehicles.⁹²

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 1575-1578.]

Ex. 13:18, 14:1-31. The Lord [said], ... “Encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ‘They are entangled in the land, the wilderness has shut them in.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, so that he will follow after them. And I will be honored on Pharaoh, and on all his host; so that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord. And . the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea. . And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left. . And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea. . And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength. . There remained not so much as

one of them. . Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, ... and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

If Pharaoh had truly accepted the idea of a Creator and its attendant implications, he would, in all probability, not only have granted Moses's request for a procession into the desert to honor [God]—he would have wanted Egypt to be part of the procession, too. . Just as his predecessor, Joseph's Pharaoh, had done, he would have sent a military honor guard. He would have sent his chariots, horsemen and archers. . If Pharaoh wasn't forthcoming in providing an honor guard, then one would be taken from him. One way or the other, Egypt's finest would escort Israel.⁹³

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 2988-2992, 3041-3044.]

Pharaoh should have willingly humbled himself and taken a subordinate position to Moses, like Esau and Edom should have willingly humbled themselves and taken a subordinate position to Jacob and Israel, and like the unglorified Gentiles in the Messianic Kingdom will willingly humble themselves and take a subordinate position to the Jewish people in the land (Is. 61:5). But since he didn't, he was brought to destruction to accomplish the same thing.

Fohrman (Non-Calvinist):

Just as Joseph's Pharaoh might have done so long ago, this Pharaoh could have reassured his people. Yes, this is unfamiliar. This whole Creator idea is new to all of us. But Israel, these former slaves, they are going to show us the way.⁹⁴

[Fohrman, The Exodus, Kindle 3078-3080.]

When Esau, the firstborn, eventually learned from his parents about the prophecy "the elder will serve the younger" (Gen. 25:23), he should have humbled himself, and willingly accepted the position of a younger brother to Jacob. Instead, "Jacob bowed down to Esau (Gen 33:3), called him lord (Gen 33:8), claimed to be his servant (Gen 33:5), and urged him to accept gifts (Gen 33:11)."⁹⁵ [Vance, Other Side of Calvinism, 322; in Myers, Re-Justification of God,

Kindle 500-502.] Nevertheless, Jacob, not Esau, got to stay in Canaan. “Esau took ... all the persons of his house, ... and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. . Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir. Esau is Edom,” Gen. 36:6-8.

Likewise, Edom should have willingly humbled themselves and taken a subordinate position to Israel. Instead, Edom didn't let Israel pass through their land when Israel left Egypt, and they helped kill Israeli survivors of the Babylonian invasion. “Neither should you have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of [Israel] that did escape; neither should you have delivered up those of [Israel] that remained in the day of distress,” Obad. 1:14.

If Edom had willingly accepted its God-appointed role, it might have been second in the Messianic Kingdom, coruling with Israel, as Israel's closest Gentile relatives. But since they didn't, they were predestined to accomplish the same subordination by their physical destruction, as an object lesson of judgment visible for the whole thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom.

Likewise, Israel should have willingly humbled themselves to Messiah and welcomed the Gentiles into their fellowship as co-heirs, but since they were unwilling, they were predestined to the 70 A. D. destruction to accomplish the same thing. Pharaoh, a Gentile, hardened to continue to reject Moses, symbolized the majority of Israel in Paul's day, hardened to continue to reject Jesus.

If Israel had accepted Messiah when he came to them, and had become missionaries to the Gentiles, everything else would have gone pretty much as it did. Rome would have come and crucified the Messiah, who would have risen from the dead and ascended to heaven. Jewish missionaries like Paul would have gone out to the Gentiles. The Roman antichrist would have been revealed and would have led Rome and the world's armies against Jerusalem and Petra in 70 AD.

Jesus would have returned from heaven and set up the Messianic Kingdom in 70 AD., and you and I would have been born during the increased fruitfulness of the kingdom.

Is. 65:18-25. Rejoice forever. ... I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. ... There will be no more an infant of days there, nor an old man that has not filled his days; for the child will die a hundred years old. . The wolf and the lamb will feed together.

So, that generation of Israel had a genuine choice whether or not to accept the Messiah, and God would have accomplished his purposes no matter what they chose. But of course, God foreknew what their choice would be. If they had been willing to receive it, God would have sent Elijah instead of John the Baptist as Jesus' forerunner.

Matt. 11:13-14. All the prophets and the law prophesied until John, and if you will receive it, this is Elijah, which was to come.

A future generation of Israel will accept Jesus as Messiah, and 144,000 Jewish missionaries will go out into the world instead of 12.

Rev. 7:4ff. There were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Rom. 9:19-21. Can't the Potter Choose?

Rom. 9:19-21. You will say then to me, "Why does he yet find fault? For who has resisted his will?" Rom. 9:20. No, but, O man, who are you that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor?

Potters certainly have a right to make whatever they like out of clay. But if we found a way to make clay come alive and be able to feel pain, God wouldn't approve of anyone making such vessels to use as clay pigeons for shooting, etc. Likewise, even God must be righteous. He can't righteously create vessels just to ...

Mt. 10:28. Destroy both body and soul in hell.

But he can righteously mold some clay into vessels of physical destruction, since he has also provided for rewards and punishments in eternity to make all things right.

Sticking to the illustration Paul gives, the Potter can create vessels out of clay, say a teapot and a plate, but he doesn't cause them to make choices. Once they are brought to life, like the teapot and plates in *Beauty and the Beast*, they make their own choices. The teapot might decide to try to hold the steak and potatoes, and the plate might decide to try to hold the tea, but they wouldn't be very good at it. God, foreknowing their choices, probably wouldn't have formed the teapot into a teapot, if he knew it would decide to try to be a plate. God, knowing the destiny each man will choose for himself, molds each person into something useful for God's plans, but doesn't thereby cause his choices.

In the previous examples of Moses and Pharaoh (and Edom earlier), we saw God didn't predestine every detail. He's not the unrighteous judge Calvinism makes him out to be, to reward and punish men for what he himself causes. However, God did choose Moses to lead his people, and so Moses had much more opportunity to ask and receive a preview of Yeshua's glory.

And after Pharaoh refused to let Israel go, when he would have insincerely given in to escape pain, God did harden his heart to help him persevere in his rebellion, which resulted in the death of his firstborn son and his drowning in the sea. Maybe Pharaoh would have had a better life in this world if God hadn't raised him up to be Pharaoh and put him in the situation he did. On the other hand, he wouldn't have had all those years as an all-powerful monarch either. Or maybe if he hadn't been Pharaoh, he still would've drowned in the Red Sea, but as a poor fisherman.

Maybe if Esau hadn't been born as Jacob's older brother, he would have been born into a worse situation. Reuben and Eliab were also firstborn brothers who were passed over in favor of Joseph and David, so it's not unusual for God to choose the younger brother.

Why is one man born rich, another poor; one healthy, another sickly; every person in different times, families, countries, and circumstances? The answer to these questions are beyond our understanding.

1 Pet. 4:19. Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator.

Rom. 9:20. Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, "Why have you made me like this?"

But this is talking about God's actions of providence. He doesn't predestinate to faith or unbelief. Paul was "a chosen [ἐκλογή, eklogē] vessel;" not chosen to believe, but chosen to serve.

Acts 9:15. He is a chosen vessel to me to bear my name before the Gentiles.

Rom. 9:22. Vessels Fitted to Destruction

Rom. 9:22. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted [κατατίζω] to destruction.

“Fitted” (καταρτίζω, katartidzo) is used of ...

1) Mending or restoring things that already exist, like nets (Mt. 4:21; Mk. 1:19, Gal. 6:1).

2) Perfecting or completing things that already exist, like perfecting praise (Mt. 21:16, Lu. 6:40, 1 Cor. 1:10, 2 Cor. 13:11, 1 Thess. 3:10, Heb. 13:21, 1 Pet. 5:10).

3) Forming something for something that's already been decided, like God preparing a body for Messiah to redeem us (Heb. 10:5, 11:3).

The “fitting” doesn't cause the decision, but arranges things in light of what already is or is already decided.

God intimately knows, from eternity past, everyone who ever enters into union with Messiah, and whose names were therefore written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. Therefore, he also knows who isn't foreknown in Messiah, and whose names therefore weren't written in the Lamb's book of life, and who will eventually perish. The Potter doesn't form them in a way that causes them to perish, but knowing they will eventually perish, providentially forms them and the circumstances surrounding their births and lives, to use in his plans, in roles appropriate for them.

Godet (Non-Calvinist):

[God, in his role as Potter, like human potters] does not create the clay; he takes it as he finds it, and adapts it as best he can to the different uses he proposes to himself. ... The use God makes of man at a given moment (a Pharaoh, for example, as a vessel of dishonor), far from excluding his moral liberty, supposes and involves it. For the honor or dishonor to which God turns him in the execution of His work is not independent, as appears from this example [Pharaoh], of the attitude taken by man.⁹⁶

[Godet, Romans, Kindle 9963-9964, 9980-9982.]

God doesn't predestine whether or not men believe, as is evident from the lack of any mention of faith in the sections on predestination, like in Romans 8:28-30 and Romans 9:6-29. But he makes use of both believers and unbelievers, men he prepares to glory and men he fits to destruction, like he made use of both Moses and Pharaoh, in his plans and purposes.

Dan. 2:21. He changes the times and the seasons, he removes kings, and sets up kings, he gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.

And he makes use of the majority of Israel who are not Israel in his plans also. God used the scandalization of the

majority of Israel to bring the gospel to the Gentiles.

Acts 11:19-26. Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but to the Jews only. And some of them, ... when they came to Antioch, spoke to the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

Rom. 9:23. Vessels Prepared to Glory

Rom. 9:23. And so that he might make known the riches [πλούτος] of his glory [as in Eph. 1:18, 3:16) on the vessels of mercy, which he had before prepared [προητοίμασεν] to glory?

Those who are predestined to glory, are also “prepared to glory” (vs. 23), throughout their lives, so they can have “a better resurrection” (Heb. 11:35).

Jas. 1:3-4. The trying of your faith produces endurance. But let endurance have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire.

The Father will give all believers “the riches of [Jesus’] glory,” but everyone will receive different amounts of those riches. We are to live in this world so as to maximize our treasures in heaven.

Mt. 6:20. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

Our glorification is certain, but we still need to be prepared to glory to increase its weight.

2 Cor. 4:17. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Rom. 9:24. Are Even Some Gentiles Called?

Rom. 9:25-26. Even us, whom he has called [ἐκάλει], not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Neither Paul, Barnabas, James, Peter, Silas, nor the rest of the early church (Acts 15:1-32; 21:17-29; Gal. 2:11-15), were Reformed in their

theology. They knew the church hadn't replaced Israel. They knew God's plans still included Israel. The question they struggled with, up until the middle of the book of Acts and beyond, was, can anyone who isn't Jewish be saved without becoming a Jewish proselyte? Did God really call any Gentiles, as Gentiles?

Rom. 9:25-26. Gentiles Called

Rom. 9:25-26. As he says also in Hosea, "I will call [καλέσω] them my people, which were not my people; and her, loved, which was not loved. And it will come to pass, that in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' there will they be called [κληθήσονται] the children of the living God."

Paul combines Hosea 2:23 and 1:10. Both passages say God will someday permanently restore Israel after a period of judgment, but he will also begin to have dealings with Gentiles. The coming of Gentiles was predestined and accomplished by God's call in Hosea. Calling as in ...

Rom. 9:7. In Isaac will your seed be called.

Hos. 2:14-23. [Restoration of Israel] I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her ... And she will sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. [Israel, not the church, will be restored] ... And I will betroth you to me for ever [restored in a permanent way that hasn't happened yet], ... in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies, ... and you will know the Lord [Jer. 31:31-37] ... And I will [permanently] sow her to me in the land [of Israel]; [Gentiles:] and I will have mercy on her that had not [ever] obtained mercy, and I will say to them which were not [ever] my people, 'You are my people;' and they shall say, 'You are my God.'

Paul uses the word "loved" and "unloved" where Hosea uses "pity" (or "have mercy on") and "unpitied" (or "had not obtained mercy,") because the yearning in the Hebrew word can encompass both meanings. Paul also switches the order to mention "people" before "loved" because he wants to emphasize God's "calling" of the Gentiles.

Rom. 9:25. I will call them my people.

Or as Hosea said, “I will say to them ... ” (Hos. 2:23).

Hos. 1:6-10. She ... bare a daughter. And God said to him, “Call her name Loruhamah [No Mercy or Not Loved]: for I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away [via Assyria]. But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them.” ... Now when she had weaned Loruhamah, she ... bare a son. Then said God, “Call his name Loammi [Not My People]; for you are not my people, and I will not be your God. [Restoration of Israel:] Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered. [Gentiles:] And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there it shall be said to them, ‘You are the sons of the living God.’”

How appropriate Hosea was commanded to name Gomer’s children to indicate they were children of harlotry instead of his children, but now God calls those who believe on Messiah “sons of God” (Jn. 1:12; Rom. 8:14, 19; 1 Jn. 3:2; etc.). Hosea said hundreds of years before

Messiah about the Gentiles, who were not considered God’s children.

Hos. 1:10. There it will be said to them, “You are the sons of the living God.”

God is the God all men. He gave the world 2000 years of focus on Israel, from Abraham to Yeshua; and then 2000 years of focus on the Gentiles, because by sheer numbers the church became predominantly Gentile after Acts 14:27; and now for the next 1000 years Messiah will rule from Israel, but ...

Mt. 8:11. Many [Gentiles] will come from the east and west, and will sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven [on earth].

Gentiles were ...

Rom. 11:24, 17. With [Israel] partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree, [because they] were grafted contrary to nature into ... [Israel's] own olive tree.

“With them partakes of,” not “supplants them from,” their own tree.

For spiritual salvation, ...

Gal. 3:26-28. “In Messiah ... there is neither Jew nor Greek.

But in everything else there is still Jew and Gentile, which is why Paul keeps talking about Jews and Gentiles in these chapters, and his other writings; just like there is still “male [and] female” (Gal. 3:28) in the physical realm, or else homosexuality wouldn't be wrong.

Rom. 9:27-29. Israel Called

Rom. 9:27-29. Isaiah also cries [κράζει] concerning Israel, “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, [only] a remnant will be saved. For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” And as Isaiah said before, “Unless the Lord of Sabbath had left us a seed, we would have been as Sodom, and been made like to Gomorrah.”

Paul combines similar wording in Hosea 1:10 and Isaiah 10:22. We already looked at Hosea 1:10 above. “Call his name Loammi [Not My People]; for you are not my people, and I will not be your God. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered,” Hos. 1:9-10.

Is. 10:20-24. It shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay [trust] on him that smote them [like Assyria and Babylon via alliances]; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet [only] a remnant of them shall return. The consumption decreed [חרץ , charatz] shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption [כלה , kalah] even determined [חרץ , charatz], in the midst of all the land. Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwell in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian.

Although this passage mentions “the Assyrian,” at the end, we know the verses before that are actually about the end times, because they talk about a determined [חרץ , charatz] consumption [כלה , kalah]. This is the same determined consumption in Isaiah 28, that will come about because of an unrighteous treaty Israel will one day (soon) make with the antichrist.

Is. 28:14-22. Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, you scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because you have said, “We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come to us; for we have

made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves.” Therefore thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believes shall not make haste ... The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place, and your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.” ... For the Lord shall rise up ... that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. ... For I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption [כלה, kalah], even determined [חרץ, charatz] upon the whole earth.

And it’s the same determined consumption described in Daniel 9.

Dan. 9:26-27 The prince that shall come [the antichrist] ... will confirm the covenant with the many [in Israel] for one seven [7 years], and in the midst of the seven [7 years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations [the abomination of desolation, Mt. 24:15] he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation [כלה, kalah], and that determined [חרץ, charatz] shall be poured upon the desolate.

In the end, when the Messianic Kingdom is set up, ...

Rom. 11:26. All Israel [living at that time] will be saved [and enter the kingdom].

But it will be an Israel that will be greatly reduced in number.

Rom. 9:29. Unless the Lord of Sabbath had left us a seed, we would have been [completely destroyed] as Sodom, and been made like to Gomorrah.

Since the Bible prophecies only a remnant of Israel will remain to enter the Messianic Kingdom, it’s understandable that the majority of Israel and their leaders in Jesus’ day could also miss the Messiah at his first coming and not be able to participate in the spiritual blessings he brought. So, both the coming of born-again Gentiles, and the anathema of the majority of natural Israel, had been foretold.

Rom. 9:30-31. What Did Israel Miss Out On?

Rom. 9:30-31. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

The thing that Israel missed out on, after the first coming of Messiah, was justification by faith, “the righteousness which is of faith” (vs. 30). (The word righteousness and justification are translated from the same Greek word.)

But the majority in Israel had always missed out on that. Believers were a minority in Elijah’s generation, and in every generation. What changed was that when God announced to the world the gospel message of justification by faith in Jesus, the unbelieving Israelites couldn’t participate in it without becoming believers. Unbelievers could participate in the temple service, and the law, and all the other things God had given Israel over the years; but only believers can participate in justification by faith. On the other hand, justification has always been by faith. Abraham and David were justified by faith.

Rom. 4:3, 6. For what do the scriptures say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness [justification] Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man, to whom God imputes righteousness [justification] without works.

So why is justification by faith after Messiah different than justification by faith before Messiah? Justifying faith has always been in God and his word.

Rom. 4:20-22. [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

But the content of that faith has changed over time. Abraham's faith was in God's promise to multiply his descendants as the stars of heaven.

Rom. 4:18. Who against hope, believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, "So shall thy seed be."

But now our faith is in Messiah.

Acts 4:11-12. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Now that Messiah has come, and revealed himself through his Son, we can't have faith in God without having faith in Messiah.

Jn. 5:21-23. The Father ... has committed all judgment to the Son, so that all men would honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that doesn't honor the Son doesn't honor the Father which has sent him.

And Israel isn't yet willing to accept Jesus as Messiah, so he has become the stumblingblock that prevents them from participating in justification by faith, (though all men share in other stumblingblocks that make it difficult for them to believe, like their own pride).

Godet (Non-Calvinist):

What Israel sought was not so much righteousness itself in its moral essence, as the law in all the detail of its external and manifold observances, ... Levitical prescriptions, minutiae about Sabbaths and meats, fastings, tithes.⁹⁷
[97 Godet, Romans, Kindle 10228-10292.]

Rom. 9:32-33. Why Didn't Israel Attain Righteousness?

Rom. 9:32-33. Why? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone, as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whoever believes on him will not be ashamed."

Paul combined the first and last part of Is. 28:16 with the middle of Is. 8:14 to show that the same stone which is a refuge to the remnant of Israel is the cause of stumbling to the majority of Israel. The Isaiah 28 passage is, again, about the future time when the Jewish leaders will lead the majority of Israel to make a treaty with the antichrist (Dan. 9:27), but a minority of Jewish people will trust in Messiah. And the Isaiah 8 passage is about the Assyrian invasion that ended the northern kingdom of Israel. We looked at the Isaiah 28 passage above so I'll only quote it briefly here.

Is. 28:14-22. Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement, ... therefore, thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation. He that believes will not make haste." ... Your covenant with death will be disannulled, and your agreement with hell will not stand.

Is. 8:12-14. Say not, "A confederacy," to all them to whom this people will say, "A confederacy;" neither fear their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

Godet (Non-Calvinist):

While the [Gentiles] have obtained what they sought not, the Jews have missed what they sought; the most poignant irony in the whole of history. . Israel thought they were advancing on a clear path, and lo! all at once there was found on this way an obstacle upon which they were broken. And this obstacle

was the very Messiah whom they had so long invoked in all their prayers! But even this result was foretold.⁹⁸

[98 Godet, Romans, Kindle 10228-10292.]

Rom. 11:1-6. The Jewish Remnant

Rom. 11:1-2a. I say then, “Has God cast away his people?” God forbid! For I am also an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away his people which he foreknew [προγινώσκω, pro-ginosko].

Paul addresses a very critical and relevant question. Has the church replaced Israel? His answer is “God forbid!” (vs. 1). Notice even after Yeshua’s generation of Israel officially rejected him, the Jewish people are still uniquely “his people” (vs. 1, 2). If you love and reverence God, this should be important to you, since it’s important to him. Is your heart like his through his Spirit?

In relation to spiritual justification, it’s true “you are all the children of God by faith in Messiah Jesus. ... There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female ... in Messiah Jesus,” Gal. 3:26-28. But, in the physical realm (which is still important which is why our physical bodies will be resurrected), there certainly is still Jew and Greek, male and female, etc., or homosexuality wouldn’t be wrong.

Here, as in many other places, God goes out of his way, as it were, to prevent men like Reformed Theologians from spiritualizing this passage. You might claim you, as part of the church, are part of spiritual Israel, but if so, which spiritual tribe are you from? Paul isn’t talking about a spiritual Israel as God’s people, but about ethnic Israel, and himself, as proof that God hasn’t cast off his people.

Rom. 11.1. I also am Israelite, ... of the tribe of Benjamin.

And the greatest proof of all that Paul gives here that God hasn’t cast away ethnic Israel, is that, as we learned in Romans 8-9, predestination can’t fail, and throughout the Bible we find that God

has predestined ethnic Israel to be the head nation in the future Messianic Kingdom.

Rom. 11:2a. God has not cast away his people which he foreknew [προγινώσκω, pro-ginosko].

God foreknew all physical Israel in “the loins of Abraham,” Heb. 7:5. God said ...

Amos 3:2. You only have I known of all the families of the earth.

Rom. 11:2b-5. Don't you know what the scripture says of Elijah? How he made intercession to God against Israel saying, “Lord, they have killed your prophets, and digged down your altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life.” But what did the answer of God say to him? “I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.” Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election [εκλογή, eklogy] of grace.

God preserves a believing Jewish remnant in every generation. Paul was part of this remnant, and the remnant includes no Gentiles.

Is. 65:8-10. As the new wine is found in the cluster [of grapes], and one says, “Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it;” so will I do for my servants' sakes [the Jewish remnant], that I may not destroy them all [the whole Jewish nation]. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains. And my elect [believing remnant] will inherit it, ... my people that have sought me.

Contrary to modern Jewish rabbis' opinion that “Jews for Jesus” and “Messianic Jews” are a threat to the survival of the Jewish people, Messianic Jews are the only thing that preserves each generation of Israel from destruction.

Is. 65:8. Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.

“Remnant,” by definition, is a minority of the whole; in Elijah's time only 7000 men and an undisclosed number of women and children. God didn't “reserve[d] to myself” (vs. 4) those seven thousand by

causing them to believe, because predestination to faith isn't taught in the Bible; but by providentially controlling the time and circumstances of the birth and lives of those he foreknew, so they would be there when and where he 'needed' them to fulfill his plans, which the Bible does teach.

Acts 17:24-26. God ... has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined [ορίζω, oridzo] the times before appointed [προστάσσω, pro-stasso], and the boundaries [οροθεσία, orothesia, from the same root as oridzo and pro-oridzo, determined and predestined] of their habitation.

And we know for sure God hasn't "cast away his people which he foreknew [προγινώσκω, pro-ginosko]" (vs. 2), so that even after Israel rejected Yeshua, ...

Rom. 11:5. At this present time also, there is a remnant [of Israel] according to the election [εκλογή, eklogy] of grace.

This is the only place in the Bible the phrase "election by grace" occurs, and it's not in relation to individual believers in the church, but about a believing remnant of physical Israel. So if Calvinists really love "election" and the so-called "doctrines of grace," let them also accept and love God's continuing purpose and plans for ethnic Israel.

Rom. 11:6. And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work.

Calvinist Version. And if by grace, then is it no more of faith, otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of faith, then it is no more grace, otherwise faith is no more faith. (But God never contrasts grace and faith, as Calvinism does.)

The Mosaic covenant of law, though profitable for educational purposes, always results in failure to keep it. But the New Covenant of grace ensures the certainty of success.

Rom. 4:15-16. The [works of the] law work wrath. ... Therefore, it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure.

Grace and faith, among the remnant, make the national election of Israel certain and sure. God's covenant to Abraham by grace and promise means there's no sin the Jewish people can commit that can make them lose their inheritance as an ethnic people.

Jer. 31:37. Thus says the Lord, 'If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, [then and only then] I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done.

Rom. 11:7-10. Israel's Hardening

Rom. 11:7. What then? Israel has not obtained that which he seeks for; but the election [ἐκλογή, eklogy] has obtained it, and the rest were hardened [πωρώω, poro-o, hardened].

The non-elect within Israel are hardened, but not to stop them from believing. (Per Calvinism, God wouldn't have to do anything special to keep dead men from believing.) The non-elect within Israel are hardened to keep them from accepting Jesus as prophet and Messiah without faith and regeneration.

Throughout Israel's history, the majority of the nation has always been unregenerate, and therefore usually rejected their prophets while they were alive. They rejected Moses at his first coming to Israel, and rejected Jeremiah until after his death. But God always made sure the unbelieving majority eventually accepted their prophecies into the Jewish Bible, so ethnic Israel would always fulfill one of its missions to the world.

Rom. 3:2. To them were committed the oracles of God.

The last chapter in the Jewish Bible includes these words:

2 Chron. 36:15-16. The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up from time to time, and sending; because he had

compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, until there was no remedy. (But they're still "his people.")

In the New Testament, Yeshua said:

Mt. 23:29-39. [You] say, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." Therefore, you are witnesses to yourselves, that you are the children of them which killed the prophets ... Behold, I send to you [New Testament] prophets, and wise men, and scribes. And some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city [like Paul did in Acts 26:11]; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel [in the first book of the Jewish Bible] to the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar [in the last book of the Jewish Bible] ... O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets, and stone them which are sent to you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you were unwilling! Behold, your house is left to you desolate. For ... you will not see me again until you will say, "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord [at Jesus' second coming]."

So there's nothing unusual about Israel rejecting a prophet. The unusual thing is that Israel continued to reject Jesus their Messiah even after his death and even to this present time. God hardens Israel during this age to prevent the Jewish people and rabbis from incorporating Jesus into Rabbinic Judaism even after Jesus' death.

Rom. 11:8. According as it is written, "God has given them the spirit of slumber [Is. 29:10], eyes that they would not see, and ears that they would not hear, to this day [Deut. 29:4].

Obviously, Israel and the church aren't synonymous despite Covenant Theology's claim they are, because the church isn't blind and deaf. Paul's quotation is from Deuteronomy 29:4.

Deut. 29:2-4. Moses called to all Israel, ... “You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, ... the signs, and those great miracles. Yet the Lord has not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, to this day.”

But Paul replaced the beginning of Deuteronomy 29:4, with the beginning of Isaiah 29:10, “The Lord has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep,” to indicate to us the context of both Old Testament passages apply.

Is. 29:10-14. The Lord has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes; the prophets and your rulers. ... And the vision of all is become to you as the words of a book that is sealed ... And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, “Read this, I ask you;” and he says, “I am not learned.” Therefore the Lord said, “Inasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, ... but have removed their heart far from me, ... therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, ... for the wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the understanding of their prudent men will be hid.

And whereas Deuteronomy 29:4 only said the Lord hadn’t given them a heart to perceive, Isaiah 29:10 said the Lord actively gave them a spirit of sleep.

Rom. 11:9-10. And David says, “Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock [Ps. 35:8], and a recompence to them. Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back always [Ps. 69:22-23].”

Paul quoted very harsh words from Psalm 69; but as was prophesied in that psalm, Israel treated their Messiah incredibly harshly on the cross.

Ps. 69:9, 20-28. For your sake I have borne reproach. Shame has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my relatives, and an alien to my mother's children [Jn. 7:1-11]. The zeal of your house has eaten me up [Jn. 2:13-17], and the reproaches of them that reproached you are fallen upon me. ... Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness. And I looked for

some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink [Mt. 27:33-50; Mk. 15:22-27; Lu. 23:33-46; Jn. 19:17-30]. Let their table become a snare before them, and that which should have been for their welfare [the coming of Messiah], let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not. . Pour out your indignation upon them, . and let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute him whom you have struck [as a substitutionary sacrifice for them]; and they talk to the grief of those whom you have wounded [Is. 63:4-5]. Add iniquity [of rejection Messiah] to their [preexisting] iniquity [which should have been forgiven through his sacrifice], and let them not come into your righteousness [justification by faith]. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

For that generation of Israel's cruelty on top of cruelty, David prayed they receive judgment, and iniquity on top of iniquity.

Rom. 11:11-24. Ethnic Israel

Rom. 11:11. I say then, have they stumbled so they would fall? God forbid! But rather through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles, to provoke them [Israel] to jealousy [and salvation].

God's plans allowed Israel to fall so salvation would go out to the Gentiles, so Gentiles could be saved as Gentiles rather than as Jewish proselytes, so Israel could be made jealous, so Israel will come to faith and salvation. When Jewish people with a heritage and culture of Bible and God, find keeping the law to be burdensome, and have no natural desire nor zeal for God, because they don't know God personally; when they see large numbers of Gentiles genuinely, and fervently, knowing, serving, and loving their God, it causes them to reconsider Jesus as Messiah. So, the fall of Israel wasn't only, or even primarily, for the salvation of the Gentiles, but also, and primarily, for the spiritual salvation of the Jewish people themselves. The Jewish people have suffered much physically over the centuries, but spiritual salvation which results in resurrection and eternal life is even more important.

Rom. 11:12-15. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify my office, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy them [my Jewish brethren] which are my flesh, and might save some of them. If the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what will the receiving of them be, but life from the dead [resurrection and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom].

Israel's "fall", "diminishing," and "casting away," brought the "riches of the world," "the riches of the Gentiles," and "the reconciling of the world." That is, it brought the gospel to the world, and enabled Gentiles to be accepted by God as Gentiles, without having to become Jewish proselytes or having a relationship with Israel like ...

Acts 10:22. Cornelius, the centurion, a just man, and one that feared God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews.

But Israel's future "fulness" and "receiving" will be "much more", for the whole world, even "life from the dead," because it will bring in the Messianic Kingdom, resurrection, and glorification.

And Paul rejoices he's the apostle to the Gentiles, not just, nor even primarily, for the sake of the Gentiles; but also, and primarily, because evangelizing and edifying the Gentiles ...

Rom. 11:14. May provoke to jealousy them [my Jewish brethren] which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

Jewish evangelism always has priority for Paul.

Rom. 1:15-16. I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also, for ... it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

This is the heartbeat of Paul. Is it our heartbeat also?

Rom. 11:16-18. For if the firstfruit is holy, the whole loaf is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if you boast, [you should remember] you don't bear the root, but the root you.

The "root" is the Jewish people, the majority of which have always been unjustified unbelievers. Therefore the olive tree isn't Jesus, the vine of John 15, nor any kind of spiritual salvation. It can probably be thought of as the place of God's blessing and service. Even unbelieving Jews shared in the possession of the land of Canaan, Israeli citizenship, and the physical blessings of ...

Rom. 9:1-3. The [national] sonship, and the [shekinah] glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the [temple] service of God, and the promises; [and] the fathers.

But they couldn't share in the blessings of the risen Messiah without faith and justification. The "some" of the branches that were broken off were the unsaved majority of the Jewish people after Messiah came.

God's work in the world is comprised of two parts. Physical salvation, which he accomplishes through physical Israel, which will culminate in the future Messianic Kingdom, and which we will participate in after the resurrection and glorification of our physical bodies. And spiritual salvation, which was by faith in God until Yeshua, and now specifically by faith in Jesus Messiah. It's vital we teach both these aspects of salvation!

In the last nine verses of Acts 28, the history of the church in the Bible ends when Paul ...

Acts 28:23-31. Expounded and testified the kingdom of God [physical salvation: Israel, the Messianic Kingdom, and bodily glorification], persuading them concerning Jesus [spiritual salvation: justification by faith in Jesus and sanctification], both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets; ...

preaching the kingdom of God [physical salvation: Israel, the Messianic Kingdom, and bodily glorification], and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Messiah [spiritual salvation: justification by faith in Jesus and sanctification].

God ended the book of Acts like this to show what he wants the church to be doing until Jesus returns, instead of making up new agendas like Acts 29 for the “next chapter” in church history.

The spirit of this subsection is for Gentile believers to appreciate the continuing role of ethnic Israel in God’s plans for the redemption of the world. And the purpose of the whole section of chapters 9 through 11 is to guard against anyone thinking the gospel and the church have replaced Israel.

Why does Paul have to start this 9-11 section of the book with three affirmations that he isn’t lying about his concern for ethnic Israel? Because God knew, that despite Paul’s efforts, the large influx of Gentiles into the early church, and later “spiritual” instead of literal interpretations of scripture, would one day result in most of Christendom abandoning their appreciation and understanding of the continuing importance of Israel in the plan of God.

That’s why every chapter in this section starts with an affirmation of the same truth. And that’s why this section closes with one scripture’s greatest eulogies to the glory of God; yet one based on his continuing work with ethnic Israel. Yet most Christians, especially Reformed Christians, who are supposed to be so into predestination and eulogies to the glory of God, reject the importance of the Lord’s brethren physical brethren “according to the flesh” (Rom. 9:3).

Beginning of Chapter 9. 1] I say the truth in Messiah, 2] I lie not, 3] my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites; to whom pertains the sonship, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;

whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Messiah came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen!

Beginning of Chapter 10. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved, for I bear them record they have a zeal of God.

Beginning of Chapter 11. I say then, “Has God cast away his people [Israel]?” God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin [you can’t spiritualize this because believers have no spiritual tribe]. God has not cast away his people [Israel] which he foreknew.

Eulogy Ending Chapters 9-11. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. For the [unconditional] gifts and calling of God are without repentance [God won’t change his mind]. ... These [Jewish people] also have now not believed, so that through your mercy they may also obtain mercy ... O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! ... For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen!.

Remember, believing Gentiles! Remember, Reformed theologians! That ...

Rom. 11:17-18. You, ... a wild [Gentile] olive tree, were grafted in among them [the believing Jewish remnant], and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree [“their own olive tree” vs. 24]; [therefore] boast not against the branches. But if you boast, [remember] you don’t bear the root [the Jewish people], but the root you!

Rom. 11:19-22. You will say then, “The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Be not highminded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural [cultivated] branches, take heed lest he also spare not you.

There are two possible responses to being grafted into the Jewish olive tree in place of the unsaved Jewish majority.

1) Pride. Thinking you're better than them. But Paul says "be not highminded" (vs. 20).

Or, 2) Caution. Being instructed that God is not only a God of love, but also of judgment, so "Fear" (vs. 20).

The unbelieving Jewish majority were judged by the physical judgments of the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem and the 132 AD diaspora. Born again believers are also subject to physical judgment.

There is a sin unto death," 1 Jn. 5:16.

1 Cor. 5:5. Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

2 Cor. 11:30. For this reason many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

Heb. 12:11-13. No chastening for the present seems to be joyous; ... make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but rather let it be healed.

1 Pet. 4:17. Judgment must begin at the house of God

Rom. 11:19-22. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God. On them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in his goodness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

The unsaved Jewish majority was broken off because of unbelief.

Rom. 11:20. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith.

Rom. 11:23. If they remain not still in unbelief

Rom. 11:30-31. [You] have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; these ... have now not believed.

The change was not that they were believers, and became unbelievers. The change was that Jewish unbelievers used to be able to partake of the external Jewish blessings, like the prophets, the

temple service, the shekinah glory, etc. But the Jewish Messiah can only be partaken of by saving faith.

Paul never warns believing Gentiles to keep believing here. There is no possibility of any believer becoming an unbeliever because predestination to glory guarantees arrival at glorification, and the fruit of the indwelling Holy Spirit is never-ending ...

Gal. 5:22. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

Rom. 11:20. You [continue to] stand by faith.

God doesn't cause faith before justification, but he does cause faith forever after ...

Rom. 5:2. "Having been justified by faith, ... we had access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.

We can't fall in faith, or fall in grace, but only stand in faith. The more we deserve to fall, the more the nature of grace prevents it.

Rom. 5:20. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Paul warns Gentile believers that if they don't ...

Rom. 11:22. Continue in his goodness, ... you also will be cut off.

What did Gentile believers do to get into his goodness in the first place? Nothing. They got there because of the fall of Israel.

Rom. 11:11. Through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles, to provoke them [the Jewish people] to jealousy [so the Jewish people eventually become believers].

Rom. 11:19. The branches were broken off, so that I might be grafted in.

Rom. 11:22. On them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness.

And what can the Gentiles do to avoid being cut off from his goodness? Nothing. When Israel returns to the stage, which they

certainly will as we'll see in the next few verses, the Gentiles, as Gentiles, will exit.

Rom. 11:23-24. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which are the natural [cultivated] branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

It's easier, as it were, for God to restore the natural branches, than it was to temporarily replace them with unnatural branches. "Natural" here is "φύσις," according to inherent nature (a good thing), not "ψυχικός," soulish or physical, like in 1 Cor. 2:14 (a bad thing). The natural, cultivated branches are Jewish individuals, "Israelite[s]" (vs. 1), who belong to "a good olive tree, ... their own olive tree" (vs. 24), because God had been cultivating his relationship with them for two thousand years before Messiah came. No matter how secular or unobservant any Jewish person might be, he can't completely escape his heritage, culture, and sometimes, even persecution from Gentiles.

In contrast, the Gentiles are "wild by nature" (vs. 24). Not "Jews by nature, [but] sinners of the Gentiles" (Gal. 2:15).

Eph. 2:11-12. Remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh [physically], ... at that time you were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

So "why should it be thought a thing incredible with you" (Acts 26:8) Reformed theologians, that God will one day restore ethnic Israel to once again lead his work of redemption in the world?

Rom. 11:25-29. All Israel Will Be Saved

Rom. 11:25. For I'm not willing, brethren, that you would be ignorant of this mystery, lest you would be wise in your own conceits, that hardening

[πώρωσις, porosis] IN PART is happened to Israel, UNTIL the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Paul doesn't want believers to be ignorant, to lack knowledge, of the mystery of ethnic Israel's temporary hardening and fall and future softening and restoration. Unfortunately, despite Paul's efforts, too many Christians, especially Reformed theologians, have become ignorant of this very thing.

"Mystery" [μυστήριον, mustyrian] doesn't mean something hard to understand in Greek, but something previously unknown, that is now revealed. Israel's hardening was prophesied several places in the Old Testament, but it wasn't clear when and how the prophecies would be fulfilled until after it happened.

Rom. 9:19-21. Did not Israel know? ... Isaiah ... said, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people."

The hardening Paul refers to, doesn't mean God prevents individual Jewish people from believing on Jesus for spiritual salvation, but rather he prevents the unsaved majority of ethnic Israel, led by their rabbis, from accepting Jesus as a prophet and Messiah, despite their being unsaved, as they eventually did the other prophets God sent them, often posthumously after an earlier generation rejected and killed them.

Romans 11:25 tells us two very important things about Israel's present hardness.

1) It's partial, "hardness in part", because today, as always, there's a believing Jewish remnant, and all believers accept Jesus as Messiah.

2) It's temporary, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," meaning until the full number of foreknown Gentiles believe and are justified.

Thus, no one should "be wise in your own conceits" (vs. 25), like Covenant Theologians, who mistakenly say the church has replaced Israel.

Jer. 31:35-37. Thus says the Lord, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, ... “If those ordinances depart from before me, ... then [and only then] the seed of Israel will also cease from being a nation before me for ever.” Thus says the Lord, “If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, [then and only then] I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all [the evil] they have done.”

Jer. 32:37-42. I will gather them out of all countries [so this doesn't refer to the Babylonian exile which was in only one country], where I have driven them in my anger [for the last 2000 years], ... and I will bring them again to this place. ... And I will give them one heart, ... so that they will fear me for ever [this didn't happen yet, and not during the return after the Babylonian exile]. . And I will make an everlasting covenant with them ... to do them good ... I will put my fear in their hearts, that they will not depart from me. Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul ... I [will] bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

Jer. 33:14-20. “The days come,” says the Lord, “that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah ... If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there would not be day and night in their season, then [and only then] may also my covenant be broken with David my servant [ethnic kings from Judah] . and with the [ethnic priests from the] Levites.”

Jer. 33:24-26. Don't you consider what this people has spoken, saying, “The two families which the Lord has chosen, he has even cast them off?” [like Rom. 11:1-2] . Thus says the Lord, “If my covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then [and only then] will I cast away the seed of Jacob and David; ... for I will ... have mercy on them.

The church was never “gather[ed] ... out of all countries, where I have driven them in my anger and [brought] again to this place” (Jer. 32:37). Christians are not part of, “the house of Israel” or “the house of Judah” (Jer. 33:14), the family of “David” or the “Levites”

(Jer. 33:22-24). We must not say like some “have spoken, saying, ‘The two families which the Lord has chosen, [David and Levi] he has even cast them off? Thus, they have despised my people, that they would be no more a nation,” Jer. 33:24, like by saying ‘the church has replaced Israel.’

Rom. 11:1. Has God cast away his people? God forbid. For I [Paul] am also an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

If you think this all applies to the church, which of the twelve tribes are you from?

Rom. 11:26a. And so all Israel will be saved!

Romans 11:26, like Romans 11:25, is a key verse in understanding God’s plan for Israel and the world. Israel today includes some believers and unbelievers. But when Messiah sets up the kingdom, physical reality will match spiritual reality, and there will be no unbelievers within Israel. The salvation referred to in “All Israel will be saved” (11:26), is both spiritual and individual, and physical and national, because, ...

Jn. 3:3. Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the [Messianic] kingdom of God.

Jer. 31:1, 34. I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be my people. ... They will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, ... for I will forgive their iniquity.

Ez. 20:40. In my holy mountain ... will all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me.

Joel 2:27-32. I am in the midst of Israel, and ... I will pour out my spirit upon all [Jewish] flesh ... before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And ... whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, . and in the [believing ethnic Jewish] remnant whom the Lord will call.

God will ensure all Jewish people who are alive on earth at the future time when the Messianic Kingdom is set up, will be believers; not by predestinating them to believe, but by allowing the unbelievers to die.

Zech. 12:9-13:8 In that day, ... all the nations [will] come against Jerusalem. ... In all the land, ... two parts therein will be cut off and die, but the third [part] will be left therein.

Ez. 20:34-31. I will cause you to pass under the rod, ... and I will purge out from among you the rebels. . I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, but they will not enter into the land of Israel. ... For in my holy mountain ... will all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me. ... I will bring you . into the country [Canaan/Israel] for which I lifted up mine hand [in oath] to give it to your fathers, . when I have [graciously] wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways.

God will ensure one third of the Jewish people living at the time are believers, not by predestinating one third to faith, but by providentially controlling the time and place each person foreknown in Messiah will be born.

Rom. 11:26b-27. As it is written, “There will come out of Zion the Deliverer, and will turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant to them, when I will take away their sins.”

Jesus will be ethnic Israel’s future physical Deliverer. Like in a suspenseful movie, just in time at the last second, the Messiah will arrive and deliver ethnic Israel from the antichrist’s Gentile armies.

Zech. 14:2-4. I will gather all [Gentile] nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city will be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city will go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then will the Lord go forth, and fight against those [Gentile] nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet will stand in that day on the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.

But Jesus will also be ethnic Israel's future spiritual Deliver through the New Covenant, which promised both forgiveness of sins, justification, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, for sanctification.

Paul described the promises of the New Covenant, by combining the beginning of ...

Is. 59:20-21. The Redeemer will come to Zion. ... This is my covenant with them: ... my spirit ... and my words ... will not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your seed ... for ever.

With the end of ...

Jer. 31:31-34. I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. This will be the covenant: ... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. And will be their God, and they will be my people. And ... they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ... For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

To get ...

Rom. 11:26b-27. And so all Israel will be saved. as it is written, "There will come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant to them, when I will take away their sins."

Although the church shares in the spiritual blessings of this New Covenant already, the covenant won't be made "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah" (Jer. 31:31) until the time of Jesus' return, when "all Israel will be saved" (vs. 26).

As Nineveh had a national, organized repentance, "The king ... caused it to be proclaimed, ... 'Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, ... feed, nor drink water; but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth'" (Jonah 3:5-8); likewise, Israel will also someday have a national, organized repentance about having rejected Jesus as Messiah.

Zech. 12:10-13:1. I will pour on the house of David, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace. . And they will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, . every family apart. The family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart. . In that day, there will be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin [national justification] and for uncleanness [national sanctification].

Rom. 11:28. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election [ἐκλογή, eklogē], they are beloved for the father's sakes.

Tragically, before the 70 AD. judgment, the Jewish people had enough political power to physically persecute the church, like Paul (Acts 26:10-15) did before he became a believer. But also tragically, after the first century, various false ‘Christians;’ like the Roman Catholic Church which was empowered by the Roman emperor Constantine after 300 AD., and like some Reformed theologians after 1500 AD. who were misled by their non-literal interpretations of the Old Testament; physically persecuted the Jewish people, the beloved flesh and blood brethren of Yeshua Messiah and Paul.

If Reformed theologians love the word “election (ἐκλογή, eklogē),” then let them also love the certainty of ethnic Israel’s continuance as God’s beloved, because three of the seven occurrences of the word “election” in Greek (ἐκλογή, eklogē) in the New Testament, are in this one chapter, about how God will never cast away ethnic Israel, “his people” (vs. 1). (I apologize if these words of Romans 11, that reveal God’s heart, don’t match up with your theological system.)

1) Vs. 5. There is a[n ethnic Jewish] remnant according to the election of grace.

2) Vs. 7. Israel [as a whole] has not obtained that which he seeks for; but the [ethnic Jewish] election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

3) Vs. 28. As touching the election, they are beloved.

Rom. 11:29. For the gifts and calling [κλησις] of God are without repentance.

If God can repent of the gifts and calling of the nation of Israel, he can also repent of the gifts and calling of individual believers in the church (but of course he can't). If Israel can lose its national salvation, then Christians can lose their individual salvation and glorification. If God is under no obligation, because of his own righteousness (Titus 1:2), to keep his promises to Israel, then he's under no obligation to keep his promises to the church. And you can't keep your promises to one person, say John, by giving what you promised him to another person, like Mary.

Romans 8 shows that individual predestination to glorification guarantees the future glorification of individual believers. And the purpose of Romans 9-11 is to show that national predestination to glorification guarantees the future glorification of Israel in the future Messianic Kingdom.

God can't lose "Israel his inheritance" (Ps. 78:71).

Ps. 135:4. For the Lord has chosen Jacob to himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.

Is. 45:4. Israel, my elect.

Is. 48: 12. Israel, my called

Is. 46:13. Israel, my glory.

If Calvinists really desire God's glory, then let them join in humbly accepting the subservient place physical Gentile nations (not including physically glorified Gentile individuals) will have to Israel in the coming kingdom.

Is. 14:1-2. The Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land [beginning in 1948]; and the strangers [not-yet-

glorified Gentiles alive when the future kingdom is set up] will be joined with them, ... and the house of Israel will possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids.

Rom. 11:30-36. God's Plan for Israel and Gentiles

Rom. 11:30-32. For as you [Gentiles] in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these [Israelites] also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God has concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

The change is not that there are less believers among the Jewish people today than in the past. In Elijah's time there were only seven thousand men. But now Gentiles can believe as Gentiles, without becoming proselytes, or Godfearers with connections to Israel, and thus Gentiles, by their numbers, dominate the church.

The church and Israel are still separate entities. God uses them both differently during different periods. One period the Gentiles are dependent on Israel to know God; the next period Israel is dependent on the Gentiles to be aroused to know God. It's like how God created woman from, of, and for man; but then also made it so each man is born of woman (1 Cor. 11:7-12).

Rom. 11:33-36. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor? Or who has first given to him, and it will be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

The Purpose of Romans 9 - 11

Salvation is comprised of three parts: our past spiritual justification event, our present practical sanctification process, and our future physical glorification event. In the spiritual realm of justification and sanctification, there is no Jew or Gentile; but in the physical

realm, our salvation is interwoven with Israelology, which comprises the majority of the Bible's content. If you're not teaching about this physical aspect of our salvation, including the future glorification of our physical bodies and the Israelology with which it's connected, you're failing to teach one third of what we need to know about the gospel and salvation.

One reason Paul added Romans 9-11, after discussing our glorification in Romans 8, is to ensure that as we teach through the New Testament, the church brings the doctrines of Israel, which are mostly found in the Old Testament, into our teaching. It's one thing to say the word Israel fourteen times as you teach through these three chapters (Rom. 9:4, 6, 6, 27, 27, 31; 10:1, 19, 21; 11:1, 2, 7, 25, 26). It's another to actually acknowledge the message of these three chapters: that ethnic Israel's unique role in God's plan is not over. For example, Stott says:

Stott:

Paul rehearses four times, with modifications, the same Jews-Gentiles-Jews-Gentiles sequence. First, in his 'chain of blessing' (11-12); ... Secondly, in reference to his own ministry (13-16); ... Thirdly, in the allegory of the olive tree (17-24); [and in] the 'chain of blessing', as Israel's disobedience has led to mercy for the Gentiles, which in turn will lead to mercy for Israel [in 30-31].⁹⁹

[Stott, Message of Romans, 307-308.]

Yes, but what is the end goal of all these gymnastics as far as Stott is concerned? In his opinion, it teaches the Jews are just one more ethnicity among all ethnicities!

Stott:

Paul has been at pains to argue that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles either in sin (3:9, 22) or in salvation (10:12). . He has predicted the future 'fulness' both of Israel (12) and of the Gentiles (25). It is when these two 'fulnesses' have been fused that the new humanity will have been realized, ... the great multinational multitude which no-one can count (Rev. 7:9). . The end of God's ways will be . mercy on the fulness of both Jews and Gentiles, mercy on 'them all' . without distinction.¹⁰⁰

[Stott, Message of Romans, 308-309.]

That's exactly the opposite of Paul's message in Romans 9-11. It's an exposition of Calvinism and Replacement Theology, not of Romans 9-11. It's also a bad exposition of Revelation 7, which also talks about "a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Judah, . twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben, ... twelve thousand" (Rev. 7 3-5), etc. God doesn't 'waste' space in the scriptures by saying twelve thousand of the tribe of X twelve times, to have us then spiritualize all 144,000 to include Gentiles and Jews indiscriminately.

Stott says regarding "All Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26):

Stott:

'All Israel' must mean the great mass of the Jewish people, comprising both the previously hardened majority and the believing minority. ... Whether or not Dr Tom Wright is correct in rejecting the notion of 'a large-scale, last-minute salvation of ethnic Jews', [Wright, 233] his emphasis on present evangelism ('now', three times in verses 30 and 31) is healthy: 'Paul is envisaging a steady flow of Jews into the church, by grace through faith.' [Wright, 249].¹⁰¹

[Stott, Message of Romans, 303, 305.]

So Wright and Stott envisage "a steady flow of Jews into the church" during the times of Israel's hardening when "through their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles" (vs. 11). And they envisage "a steady flow of Jews into the church" after the Jewish hardening is removed and "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26). In other words, they don't let the text interfere with their teaching of Reformed theology that excludes any special place for ethnic Israel.

Why do I spend so much time and space including Old Testament scriptures from books like Jeremiah and Zechariah about the certainty of Israel's future national glorification in my commentary on Romans 9-11? Because when Paul combines quotes from the Old Testament into one, he is demonstrating he's trying to save space, and actually wants us to bring the whole passage where the quotes come from into our consideration. Commentators who don't

approach these chapters with the perspective they're about God's distinct dealings with national Israel, and the certainty and even entwinement of both their salvation and ours, aren't really presenting the message of these chapters.

Biblically, "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26), means every ethnic Jew of the last generation before the Messianic Kingdom, will be a believer; and that will bring in Israel's national, physical salvation, along with our individual, physical glorification; and you can't have one without the other.

Rom. 11:15. For if the [temporary] casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what will the [future] receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

When Yeshua Messiah mounts his white horse (or white, horse-like cherub, since horses don't fly) in Revelation 19 and rides out to "strike the nations" (Rev. 19:15), which "nations" will he strike? Not Israel. Jesus is Jewish. He will fight on the side of the Jews, and save them from the Gentile armies of the world.

Zech. 14:1-3. The Lord will also save the tents of Judah first. ... In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ... I will seek to destroy all the [Gentile] nations that come against Jerusalem. ... I will gather all [Gentile] nations against Jerusalem to battle. ... Then will the Lord go forth, and fight against those [Gentile] nations [including the United States if we're still a country then].

After giving nineteen chapters in Revelation about the seven years leading up to Messiah's return, why does God give only one verse about the thousand-year Messianic Kingdom?

Rev. 20:4. They lived and reigned with Messiah a thousand years.

Because much of the Old Testament, including most of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, already provides the details about the kingdom.

When God comes down to dwell with men in the eternal state per Revelation 21-22, he will dwell in the New Jerusalem, not New York. Jerusalem will have the names of the twelve sons of Jacob on the gates, and the names of the twelve Jewish apostles on the wall.

Rev. 21:24-26. The kings of the earth [will] bring their glory and honor into it, ... the glory and honor of the nations into it.

Which nations will bring their riches to Jerusalem? The Gentile nations; not Israel. The Jewish people will be the ones living in Jerusalem and Israel.

The future Messianic Kingdom is a physical kingdom on earth in which we will dwell in physical glorified bodies of “flesh and bone” (Luke 24:39), and so it will be a realm where genealogies matter. Ezekiel 40-48 describes the resurrected David (Ez. 44:3; 45:7-22; 46:2-18; 48:21-22; Jer. 30:9) from the tribe of Judah ruling in Jerusalem, and the priests and Levites (43:19; 48:11-22) from the tribe of Levi ministering in the Messianic temple.

When Paul quotes verses like “the elder will serve the younger” (vs. 12) in Romans 9, he wants us to bring in the whole doctrine of the perpetual destruction of Edom in the kingdom via the return of the warrior Messiah. When he quotes “all Israel will be saved” (Rom. 11:26), he wants us to bring in Jeremiah’s promises of the New Covenant to both houses of Israel, including how “they will all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them” (Jer. 31:34). There is no “least” and “greatest” spiritually, so this passage is not about the church.

God’s work with Israel in the physical realm doesn’t take anything away from God’s work with the church in the spiritual realm. So, what is the root of Christianity’s continual resistance to God’s work with Israel in the physical realm?

Alva McClain tells the story of a hefty preacher at a dinner saying it would be carnal for Jesus to set up a physical kingdom. McClain commented that if the kingdom of God can exist in an overweight preacher eating fried chicken, why can't it exist in a physical kingdom on earth that Messiah himself sets up? The denominations that object most strenuously to a future, physical, Messianic kingdom are the same ones that set up endless organizations, committees, buildings, and educational programs for they themselves to 'bring in the kingdom' now on earth - but they say it wouldn't be spiritual if God through Messiah did something similar.

Calvinism, Reformed Theology, Covenant Theology, and Replacement Theology, all use non-literal methods of interpretation, which are the root of the problem. But if you don't interpret the Bible literally, it can mean anything; and if it can mean anything, then it means nothing; because nobody's symbolic interpretation can be proven better or worse than another's.

More than half the Bible is incomprehensible to Calvinists because of their alliance with non-dispensational theology. For example, Matthew Henry said regarding Ezekiel's Temple in Ezekiel 40-48:

Matthew Henry (Calvinist):

Here is one continued vision, beginning at this chapter [Ezek. 40], to the end of the book, which is justly looked upon to be one of the most difficult portions of scripture in all the book of God. ... Many commentators, both ancient and modern, have owned themselves at a loss what to make of it and what use to make of it.¹⁰²

[Henry, Commentary on the Whole Bible, Kindle 229611-229615.]

Yes, if your theology forces you to allegorize all those cubits, a simple architectural blueprint becomes more difficult to interpret than the great truths of Ephesians. If the first 6x6 cubit square guardroom represents the stability of the church, then the other 35 guardrooms, and all the other square areas represent the same thing, which would be an inefficient way for God to reveal the church is stable! And if the first 6x6 cubit square guardroom

represents the stability of the church, then the 6x5 cubit space next to it, and the other 24 6x5 cubit spaces, must represent the instability of the church. But if taken literally the cubits ... cubits, each necessary to describe an important physical building that will exist during the future Messianic Kingdom in Jerusalem.



John 6. Come by Faith

Introduction

Dodd:

The Book of Signs, chs. ii-xii, ... seems naturally to divide itself into seven episodes, each consisting of one or more narratives of significant acts of Jesus, accompanied by one or more discourses designed to bring out the significance of the narratives.⁸⁰

[Dodd, Fourth Gospel, 290.]

Here are several ways expositors have divided the book ⁸⁰ [Godet, John's Gospel, Kindle 4926-5085. Dodd, Fourth Gospel, part x.], and my own suggestion, based mostly on Dodd's divisions. By dividing Dodd's narratives and discourses in chapter 5 and 6 into two, which I believe is John's intention based on the content, we get a consistent pattern of NNDD (Narrative, Narrative, Discourse, Discourse) for each of the first three episodes. I also see a pattern in these chapters, where every narrative or discourse alternates between, first "Life," and then "Resurrection," as its theme. The book is about eternal life, which is first a different kind of life, and

secondly one that lasts forever because of resurrection. I also title the episodes differently than Dodd.

OUTLINES OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN																							
L=Life N=Narrative R=Resurrection D=Discourse																							
Chapter	1	2	2	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	9	11	12	13-17	18	20			
	a	b	a	b	a	b	a	b	c	a	b	c	d	8	10				19	21			
O'Donnell	Life													Light		Love		Love		Light		Life	
	Spirit of			Word of			Bread of																
	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R											
	N	N	D	D	N	N	D	D	N	N	D	D											
Dodd	N	N	D	D	N	N	D	N	D	N	D												
Episode	E1			E2			E3			E4	E5	E6	E7										
	NwBgn			Life			Light			LifeDth			Book of Passion										
Arnaud	Passvr			Feast			Passvr			Tbrn	Dedi	Passover											
Godet	Messh			Unbelief						Faith													
Olshsen	Sheep			World						Disciples			Dth			Resur							
Bmgrtn	Works			Struggles						Moral Victory			Glory										
Reuss	Enrolling			Selecting						His Own			Dnouemnt										
Baur	Faith & Unbelief			Faith Ovr Unblf			Dth			Resurr													
Luthrdt	Sn of God			Jewish Unbelief			Faith of His Own																
Meyer	Faith & Unbelief			Unbelief			Glory of Jesus																
Lange	Light			Darknss			Incrsng			Sepratn			Frnds			EnmyVctry							

John said he wrote his gospel so that people would believe. Contrast John's message with Calvinism's message.

Jn. 20:31 These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and so that believing you may have life through his name.

Calvinist Version. These are written so that you may have life through his name, and so that having life you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God.

John's first epistle helps us understand his gospel, and visa versa. His epistle was written to prove all Christians, and only Christians, walk in faith (Light, 1 Jn. 1:6-10), obedience (Life, 1 Jn. 2:1-6), and love (Love, 1 Jn. 2:7-11), because they have union with God (1 Jn.

1:3). Paul would say it like, “All (and only) those who have been justified, are being sanctified, and will be glorified” (per Rom. 5:12).

As we look at John’s Gospel, notice the many things unregenerate men can never do, that regenerate men always do, as a general way of life, just like in John’s first epistle.

Jn. 1, Prologue. The Word

The outline of the Prologue matches the outline of the book: Life (1:1-4), Light (1:5-13), and Love (1:14-18).

Jn. 1:1-4. In the beginning was the Word [Logos], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... All things were made by him ... In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John begins his gospel by talking about the Word, “Logos,” in Greek. “In the beginning [already] was [not ‘became’] the Word” (vs. 1). The beginning refers to the beginning of Genesis 1:1, when “all things were made ... that [were] made” (vs. 3), but the Word wasn’t made then (or ever), because he already “was.”

The Word was both, “with God and ... was God” (vs. 1); both separate from God, and part of God, at the same time.

The word “Logos” was already in use in Greek philosophy when John wrote his gospel. But John’s Logos was based on the concept of the “Memra,” the Word of God, in the Old Testament, which is sometimes identified as someone distinct from God, and sometimes identified as God himself.

The entire Old Testament talks about someone called the Angel of the Lord. He looked like a man, because angels in the Bible don’t have wings, except for Cherubim and Seraphim. He appeared to Hagar (Gen. 16:7-13), ate and walked with Abraham (Gen. 18:1, 22; 19:1), wrestled with Jacob (Gen. 32:30, spoke to Moses face to face (Deut. 34:10), ate with the 70 elders (Ex. 24:9-11), gave commands to Joshua (Josh. 5:14), and announced Samson’s birth (Jdg. 13:22). He was in the burning bush (Ex. 3:2-4), and the shekinah glory

cloud that led Israel through the wilderness (Ex. 14:19, 23:20-21; Ezek. 1:26), and dwelt in the tabernacle and Solomon's temple (Ex. 14:19; 23:20-21).

The Targums are Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Old Testament. Aramaic was the common language of Israel after the return from Babylon captivity. The Bible says Isaiah "saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, ... and his glory filled the temple (Is. 6:1). The Isaiah Targum says Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord sitting on his throne. Isaiah said, "I am undone; because I ... have seen the King, the Lord of hosts," Is. 6:5. John said he saw the preincarnate Jesus. "Isaiah said these things when he saw his [Jesus'] glory, and spoke of him," Jn. 12:39-41.

Which is why John's prologue says, "The Word was made flesh, and [shekinah-ed] among us, and we beheld his glory," Jn. 1:13-14. The gospel of John is about how the apostles saw his glory revealed through his miraculous signs, life, and teachings. And this is also why the prologue says, "No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son [the Word]. has declared him," Jn. 1:18.

Even though John's Logos was based on the Hebrew Memra instead of the Greek Logos, John, who wrote his gospel "that you might believe . and . have life," Jn. 20:31, certainly didn't mind that his Hebrew 'Memra' concept attracted Gentile interest because of Greek philosophical ideas about 'Logos.'

Godet

Being established at Ephesus, ... John might have often heard, in the religious and philosophical teachings or conversations, the term Word applied to the manifested God. When he inscribed it at the beginning of his narrative, therefore, it was as if he had said: "This Logos, respecting whom you are speculating, without coming to the real knowledge of Him, we possess, we Christians. We have seen and heard Him Himself, and He it is whose history we are about to relate to you." 105

[105 Godet, John's Gospel, Kindle 4110-4114.]

Jn. 1:10-12. [Jesus, the Word] was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world didn't know him. He came to his own, and his own didn't receive him. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Paul begins his letter to the Romans about the "the gospel [good news] of God" (Rom. 1:1) by talking about "the wrath of God" (Rom. 1:18), because you have to know the bad news to realize the gospel is good news. Likewise, John talks a lot about what natural men can't do, to show that the one spiritual thing natural men can do is to believe the gospel.

The world didn't know Jesus, their Creator; and the Jewish people didn't receive him, their Messiah. In other words, nobody knew or received him. Except for those who received him. Who are they who received him who couldn't receive him? "Even . them that believe on his name," Jn. 1:12.

Jn. 1:12-13. As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God. Even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Calvinist Version. As many as he gave power to become the sons of God, they received him. Even to them which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; believe on his name.

Men can't give themselves new birth and "become the sons of God ... [by] blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man" (Jn.

1:12-13). Only “them that believe on his name” (Jn. 1:12), which men can do, are given the power to be “born ... of God” (Jn. 1:13).

Jn. 1:49-51. Nathanael answered and said to him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ you believe? You will see greater things than these ... Hereafter you will see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man.

Each section of John’s gospel ends with a triumphant proclamation of faith in Jesus’ Messiahship and Sonship, followed by a word of rebuke or warning. Because Jesus knew something about him no one but God could possibly know, Nathaniel triumphantly proclaimed faith in Jesus as “the Son of God, ... the King of Israel!” (vs. 49). The word of rebuke or warning is provided by Jesus’ statement of “Really? You’ll see much more than this.”

The “angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man,” may refer to Jacob’s private vision in Bethel, like Nathaniel’s private experience under the fig tree. Jacob saw “a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it,” Gen. 28:12. The ascending and descending angels show that Jesus remains in the realm above, where he came from, even while he’s in the realm below, manifesting his glory to the apostles (“the Word was made flesh, ... and we beheld his glory,” Jn. 1:14), as described in the signs in the rest of John’s gospel.

Dodd:

There is a far-reaching equivalence of the two propositions: 'The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory'; and 'You will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.' Both of them contain in brief substance of what the evangelist is now about to relate. ¹⁰⁶

[Dodd, Fourth Gospel, 296.]

Jn. 2-4a, Episode 1. The Spirit of Life

The first section of John's gospel, chapters 1-6, are about "Life;" like John says in his prologue, "In him was life" (Jn. 1:4). This section about "Life" is comprised of three episodes. The first episode is about "The Spirit of Life" in chapters 2-4a. It contains two narratives. In 2a, at The Wedding in Cana, Jesus changed water, representing flesh, that can't energize; into wine, representing spirit, that can. In 2b, at The Cleansing Of The Temple, the nation's fleshly service to God was contrasted with Jesus spiritual zeal.

The two narratives are followed by two discourses that explain the significance of the narratives. In chapter 3, primarily to explain The Wedding in Cana narrative, John relates how Jesus told Nicodemus about the difference between being born of water (flesh) and being born of spirit. And in chapter 4, primarily to explain The Cleansing of the Temple narrative, John relates how Jesus told the woman at the well about the difference between dead well water, which can't move itself (symbolizing flesh), versus spring water, which has movement in itself (symbolizing spirit).

JOHN 2-4A. F	FLESH AND SPIRIT
Narratives	Discourses
1) 2:1-12 Marriage at Cana	1) 3:1-36 Nicodemus
Life: New Ministry Water (Flesh) vs. Wine (Spirit)	Life: New Birth Water (Flesh) vs. Spirit
2) 2:13-25 Cleansing the Temple	2) 4:1-44 Woman at the Well
Resurrection: Three Days Religion (Flesh) vs. Zeal (Spirit)	Resurrection: Messianic Kingdom Well Wtr (Flesh) vs. Spg Wtr (Spirit)

Jn. 3. Faith Precedes Regeneration

Grudem (Calvinist):

The idea that regeneration comes before saving faith is not always understood by evangelicals today. Sometimes people will even say something like, "If you believe in Christ as your Savior, then (after you believe) you will be born again." But Scripture itself never says anything like that. ... The reason that evangelicals often think that regeneration comes after saving faith is that they see the results ... after people come to faith.¹⁰⁷

[Grudem, Systematic Theology, 703.]

Scripture “never says anything like that?” Maybe “the reason evangelicals often think that regeneration comes after saving faith” is because John says so over and over in his gospel. “He that believes on the Son [requirement of faith] has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration],” Jn. 3:36.

Everlasting life is the kind of life a person receives when he’s born again, regenerated.

Pink (Calvinist):

The new birth [regeneration] is the impartation of Divine life, eternal life.⁸³

[Pink, Gospel of John, Kindle 1821-1822, 1954-1956, 2198-2199, 11689.]

Calvin (Calvinist):

Regeneration ... is the commencement of the spiritual life.⁸³

[Calvin, Institutes, Kindle 5355.]

Okay, if regeneration is receiving eternal life, then John says regeneration comes after faith, not before it. "He that . believes . is passed from death to life," Jn. 5:24.

If John says anything clearly in his gospel, it's that faith precedes life. And, by logical necessity, says unregenerate men can believe. "These are written so that you may believe, . and that [by] believing you may have life," Jn. 20:31, not "these are written so that you that may have life, and that by having life you may believe." The unbiblical language of Calvinism indicates its doctrine is also unbiblical.

Sproul (Calvinist):

When speaking of the order of salvation (ordo salutis), Reformed theology always and everywhere insists that regeneration precedes faith.⁸³

[Sproul, Reformed Theology, 226.]

But Calvin believed faith precedes regeneration. Calvin's order was:

1) Illumination by the Spirit results in Faith. "Those who were once blind are illuminated unto faith."⁸³ [Calvin, Eternal Predestination, Kindle 2091-2092.] Only the elect are "enlightened into faith."⁸³ [Calvin, Institutes, Kindle 10272.] "Whence cometh faith unto men? Only from the free illumination of the Spirit." ⁸³

[Calvin, Eternal Predestination, Kindle 1923.]

2) Faith results in Regeneration. "He baptizes us 'with the Holy Spirit and with fire,' (Luke 3:16), enlightening us into

the faith of his Gospel, and so regenerating us to be new creatures.¹¹⁴

[Calvin, Institutes, Kindle 9998-10000.] “CHAPTER 3. REGENERATION BY FAITH.”¹¹⁵

[Ibid., 10970-10971] “They were endued with the same spirit of faith by which we are regenerated to life (Acts 15:8).”¹¹⁶

[Ibid., 8237-8238.] “Those whom He blessed with this free adoption to be His sons He illumines by His Holy Spirit, that they may receive the life [regeneration] ... while others ... are left destitute of the light of faith.”¹¹⁷

[Calvin, Eternal Predestination, Kindle 89-90.]

Calvin believed God enlightened the elect to believe, and then they were regenerated as a result of their believing. But biblically, God doesn't elect anyone to enlightenment to faith, but to glorification and sanctification.

Some smorgasbord Calvinists might agree with the apostle John that faith comes before regeneration, but still believe God gives faith as a gift. Consider, though, that the God who has enough power to give dead men life or faith, also has enough power to give dead men a true choice.

Jn. 3:3-5. Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God Unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Calvinist Version. Unless a man is born again, he cannot believe
Unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot believe.

Grudem (Calvinist):

“Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:5). Now we enter the kingdom of God when we become Christians at conversion. But Jesus says that we have to be born “of the Spirit” before we can do that.¹¹⁸

[Grudem, Systematic Theology, 703-704.]

It's true new birth is a precondition for entering the kingdom, but faith is the precondition for new birth (Jn. 1:12-13). Besides, in John 3 Jesus is referring to entering the future Messianic Kingdom. The

phrases “Kingdom of Heaven” (Matt. 4:12,17) and “Kingdom of God” (Mark 1:14) both refer to the “Kingdom of the God of Heaven” (Dan. 2:44) which is a physical kingdom like the others in Daniel 2.

Whereas we might begin witnessing to a Gentile by saying, “Do you know for sure you’re going to heaven?,” we witness to a Jewish person by saying, “Do you know for sure you have a part in the world to come?” Jesus witnessed to Nicodemus by saying, “Do you know for sure you’re going to see the Messianic Kingdom?” “Many will come from the east and west, and will sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven,” Matt. 8:11. Nicodemus, can we add your name to this list?

Likewise, only saved men are made citizens of that kingdom now before it’s established. “The Father ... has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son,” Col. 1:12-13. New birth not only transfers a man from the realm of flesh to the realm of spirit, but also from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

Jn. 3:6-12. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ... You don’t receive our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and you don’t believe, how will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?

Calvinist Version. If I have told you earthly things, and you can’t believe, how will you believe if I tell you the gospel?

Steward (Calvinist):

Jesus stated that unregenerate man is unable to believe in Him. To Nicodemus he said, “If I have told you earthly things, and you believe not, how shall you believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?” 119

[Steward, Doctrines of Grace in John, Kindle 141-147.]

First, we should note that Jesus said, “You don’t believe” (vs. 12), and “how will you believe” (vs. 12), not “you can’t believe.” Secondly, Jesus said Nicodemus didn’t believe his teaching about

“earthly things” (vs. 12), probably like the invalidity of the traditions of the so-called ‘oral law;’ and therefore certainly couldn’t believe in “heavenly things” (vs. 12), like the things that would later be taught in Ephesians. Jesus didn’t say Nicodemus can’t believe the gospel. If Jesus thought Nicodemus couldn’t believe the gospel, why did he go on to preach the gospel to him? “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him would not perish, but have eternal life,” vss. 14-15.

Jesus told Nicodemus he needed spiritual life in order to understand spiritual things. “You receive not our witness” (vs. 11), because no earthly man can receive “heavenly things” [vs. 12] any more than any earthly “man [can ascend] up to heaven” (vs. 13). “The natural man doesn’t receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they [the things of the Spirit of God] are discerned spiritually,” 1 Cor. 2:14. “They are of the world; therefore they speak of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God; he that knows God hears us; he that is not of God doesn’t hear us,” 1 Jn. 4:5-6.

But Jesus said there is a way any man can come to understand heavenly things. “How will you believe?” (vs. 12). Jesus gave the answer.

Jn. 3:14-15. And no man has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of man must be lifted up, so that whoever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.

Calvinist Version. The Son of man must be lifted up, so that whoever has eternal life will believe in Him.

Not only did the Son alone come from heaven, and therefore he alone can speak of heavenly things, but he also “is in heaven” (vs. 14) even while on earth, since he is part of the Godhead. No man has ascended to heaven, nor can ascend to heaven. But some who can’t ascend to heaven, do ascend to heaven.

During one of Israel’s rebellions in the wilderness, God sent fiery (Hebrew: seraphim) (flying?) serpents among the people. After the people admitted they had sinned, God told Moses to:

Num. 21:8-9. Make [a] serpent [of brass], and set it on a pole, and ... every one that is bitten, when he looks on it, will live ... And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

The serpent on the pole represented their sin and judgment. “God ... made [Messiah] to be sin for us, [he] who knew no sin, so that we can be made the righteousness of God in him,” 2 Cor. 5:20-21. And they only had to have enough faith to look, to live.

Why doesn’t God regenerate everyone, so everyone will believe on the Son, so Messiah’s sacrifice will count for and bring justification to everyone? Why does God require faith and justification before regeneration and all the other blessings of salvation? Because the legal problem between sinners and a holy God must be resolved before God can

lavish “his love toward us” (Rom. 5:8) with all good things. God has done and is doing all he can righteously do to save sinners. Are we?

“While we were yet sinners, Messiah [could die] for us” (Rom. 5:8), because that was something God himself decided to do. But it wouldn’t be a genuine choice for a man to be regenerated before he chose to accept Jesus as his representative. That would be like God healing all the people who were bitten by fiery serpents first, and then telling them to go look at the serpent on the pole.

Spurgeon (Calvinist, but I’m using his quotation as a non-Calvinist illustration):

The sole and only warrant for a sinner to believe in Jesus is found in the gospel itself and in the command which accompanies that gospel, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” ... Any other way of preaching the gospel-warrant is absurd. If I am to preach faith in Christ to a man who is regenerated, then the man, being regenerated, is saved already, and it is an unnecessary and ridiculous thing for me to preach Christ to him, and bid him to believe in order to be saved when he is saved already, being regenerate ... I am only to preach faith to those who have it[?] Absurd, indeed! Is not this waiting till the man is cured and then bringing him the medicine? This is preaching Christ to the righteous and not to sinners ... Are we to go running up and down the world, proclaiming life to the living, casting bread to those who are fed already, and holding up Christ on the pole of the gospel to those who are already healed?120

[120 Spurgeon. Warrant of Faith, Kindle 82-95.]

The Son came down from heaven to our world below to bring us back up to heaven with him. The path he took back to heaven was by being lifted up on a pole like a transgressor to die in our place, and by merely looking to him in faith, we do the impossible made possible through his provision; we ascend up to heaven with him.

Eternal life in the gospel of John is both a different kind of life, and a life that lasts forever. It refers to both the process of sanctification as a result of regeneration now; and to the certainty of our future physical glorification later. When we receive spiritual life by being born again, we immediately start participating in spiritual things, just as the Son that came down from heaven still remained in heaven. “He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man,

which is in heaven,” vs. 13. Through regeneration as a result of faith, we can understand “heavenly things” (vs. 12).

Jn. 3:16-17. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have everlasting life. For God didn’t send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world through him may be saved.

Calvinist Version. For God so loved all kinds of people in the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever has everlasting life, will believe in him. For God didn’t send his Son into the world to condemn all kinds of people in the world; but so that all kinds of people in the world through him may be saved.

Pink (Calvinist):

With the exception of John 3:16, not once in the four Gospels do we read of the Lord Jesus, the perfect teacher, telling sinners that God loves them! ... The “world” in John 3:16 must, in the final analysis, refer to the world of God’s people. “Must,” we say, for there is no other alternative solution ... We may admit that our interpretation of John 3:16 is no novel one invented by us, but one almost uniformly given by the Reformers and Puritans.¹²¹

[121 Pink, Does God Love Everyone?, Kindle 91-93.]

Shedd (Calvinist):

The word “world,” in Scripture, frequently denotes a part of the world viewed as a collective whole, and having a distinctive character; as we speak of the scientific, or the religious world. ... John 3: 16, “God so loved the world,” ... teach[es] that redemption is intended for all races, classes, and ages of men.¹²²

[Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, Kindle 12921-12931.]

Not all Calvinists believe in the ‘Limited Atonement,’ ‘L’ of TULIP. But it makes no sense to say that God loves everyone, and thereby desires everyone’s salvation, and has the ability to cause everyone’s salvation, but doesn’t do it. (The answer of course is that God doesn’t have the ability to righteously cause everyone’s salvation, and God can’t do anything unrighteous.)

Hodge (Calvinist):

Did Christ die with the design of making satisfaction to divine justice in behalf of all men, indiscriminately, or in behalf of his elect seed personally and definitely? ... If [it could be proved] that the love which prompted God to give his Son to die, as a sin-offering, ... [was] with the purpose of saving all indifferently on the condition of faith, then it appears that [the] inference is irresistible that ... the destiny of the individual [depends] upon his own use of divine grace, and not upon the sovereign good pleasure of God.¹²³

[Hodge, A. A.. The Atonement (Kindle Locations 3991-4009). Pneuma Press. Kindle Edition.]

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

Some Calvinists willingly admit that the real issue is “whether ... God desires the salvation of all men.” [John Murray and Ned B. Stonehouse, The Free Offer of the Gospel (n. p., n. d.), 3.] Most Calvinists insist that God has no such desire. Incredibly, MacArthur says God desires the salvation of all but decrees the salvation of only some. [John MacArthur, Author and General Editor, The MacArthur Study Bible (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 1997), 1862.] — though He can do anything

He decrees Zealously defending God’s sovereignty, Calvinism reproaches His character.¹²⁴

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 11324-11330.]

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

We have no disagreement with Calvinism concerning God’s righteousness or His justice—the issue is His love. Does He love the whole world and desire all men to be saved, or doesn’t He? Calvinism limits God’s infinite love to a select group; the Bible declares His love for all—and allows man the choice that love requires.¹²⁵

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 10215-10218.]

If a building’s on fire, and we have the ability to save everyone in the building, and none of them deserve to be saved, and we choose to save only some, we can’t say we love them all.

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

It is as if God has thrown into the ocean billions of people whom He has so created that they cannot swim a stroke. He “mercifully” rescues some of them and leaves the rest to drown in eternal death. How could anyone say to those whom God created to drown, “It is your own fault!”? ... It is outrageous to suggest that those whom God foreordains to eternal doom are not only to blame for their fate but are the objects of His love, mercy, and grace! What Love Is This?! ... Calvinism tells us that the God who ... “so loved the world”—even though He could save all— damns billions for His “good pleasure” and to prove His justice. Aghast at such doctrine, one can only repeat in astonishment, What Love Is This?126

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 7301-7304; 7087-7093.]

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

We are commanded to love our enemies and to do good to all, even to those who hate us (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:35, etc.). How odd that God’s love dwelling in us would unfailingly meet through us the needs of others—yet God himself sees billions in the direst of need and refuses to help them — indeed, damns those He could save. Surely this is not the God portrayed in the Bible!127

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 9552-9555.]

The real reason God loves and provides his Son as a sacrifice for everyone, and yet doesn’t save everyone is that he can’t. There are some things God can’t do. “God, that cannot lie,” Titus 1:2.

God’s love can’t violate his righteousness. “Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, ... that he might be just and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus,” Rom. 3:25-26. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts” (Rom. 5:5) when the obstacle to the full expression of his love is taken away when we are justified by believing that “Messiah died for the ungodly” (Rom. 5:6).

There are some things that men can do that God can’t. Like lie. “God, that cannot lie,” Titus 1:2. And like genuinely believe. God

can't cause a man to genuinely choose to believe, either directly or indirectly, though that man himself can.

Jn. 3:18. He that believes on him is not condemned; but he that doesn't believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Calvinist Version. He that is not condemned believes on him; but he that is already condemned doesn't believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God, because he is condemned.

Pink (Calvinist):

By nature man is dead in trespasses and sins, and in order to obtain life he must be born again. ... It is true that a dead man cannot believe, yet he ought to.[?!] ... Let any unsaved one who reads these lines thoughtfully ponder this solemn word of the Lord Jesus: ... John 3:18, "But he that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed." 128

[Pink, Gospel of John, Kindle 1821-1822, 1954-1956, 2198-2199, 11689.] [Pink says it's impossible for men to believe, but God will punish them for not believing anyway, so men should take that warning to heart, even though they can't change it!]

To say God forever punishes men for not doing what they can't do is like a heart-breaking crime that took place when I lived in Hawaii many years ago. A father threw his little daughter repeatedly onto the kitchen floor until she died because she had wet the bed. His previous punishments probably greatly hindered, rather than helped, her learning. Can you imagine her terror that morning when she woke up and found she had wet the bed, not knowing it would be her last day on this earth because of the father that was supposed to be her source of loving protection and safety?

God actually punishes according to each man's evil deeds (Rom. 2:6-10; 6:23; Rev. 20:12-13), not for lack of faith. Calvin's God punishes men for what they can't perfectly avoid doing without providing any genuine way of salvation from their plight. With Dave Hunt we say, "What love is this?!"

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

We protest that this doctrine is an outrageous misrepresentation of God. The God-given conscience of every person, saved and unsaved, recoils at the thought of creating beings simply in order to predestine them to eternal torment [or in order to fail to predestine them to non-torment]! Tragically, Calvinism forces its adherents to reject the normal human compassion that is otherwise held in common with all mankind ... Why would the God of love and truth plead with those whom He had already predestined to doom [or failed to predestine to non-doom] to repent and believe the gospel? Calvinism turns most of the Bible into a pretense, a mere charade.¹²⁹

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 7727-7737, 12057-12059]

The reason faith is required before regeneration, is that faith results in justification. Faith in Jesus' provision for justification removes the legal obstacles to the fullness of God's love. "He that believes on him" moves a man from being "condemned already," to being "not condemned" (vs. 18) through justification by faith, and therefore he is given "the gift of God [which] is eternal life" (Rom. 6:23).

Jn. 3:19-21a. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds would be reprov'd; but he that does truth comes to the light.

Calvinist Version. For every one that does evil hates the light, neither can believe in the light; but he that does truth can believe in the light.

Notice John says no one who does evil "comes to the light," not "can believe in the light." We are all guilty sinners who don't want our evil deeds exposed, therefore it's impossible for us to come to the light. But every man can believe the gospel, and thereby receive forgiveness of sins, and then, with a guilt-free conscience and the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit given to us because all legal obstacles have been removed, we not only come, but run, to the light.

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

James White [in the Potter's Freedom] devotes an entire chapter to "The Inabilities of Man." ... Nowhere, however, does he cite a scripture that declares the most wretched sinner's inability to believe the gospel or to receive the free gift of eternal life that God offers to all. There are, of course, many scriptures describing man's evil heart and practices.

None, however, states that a man cannot believe the gospel unless he is one of the elect and has been given that faith by a sovereign act of God.¹³⁰

[130 Hunt, What Love, Kindle 3444-3455.]

Jn. 3:31b-36. He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth. He that comes from heaven, ... what he has seen and heard, that he testifies; and no man receives his testimony. He that has received his testimony has set to his seal that God is true. He that believes on the Son has everlasting life, and he that doesn't believe the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

Calvinist Version. He that has everlasting life, believes on the Son; and he that doesn't see life, will not believe the Son.

"No man receives his testimony" except for "he that has received his testimony." Who are these people who receive his testimony who can't receive his testimony? "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life," Jn. 3:36. Everlasting life is life from above, the same place where the Son saw and heard the things he testified. Men that believe and are born with everlasting life from above, then receive the Son's testimony of what he saw and heard in heaven, that they couldn't receive before.

The first episode ends with the triumphant proclamation of faith, "this is indeed the Messiah, the Savior of the world!" Jn. 4:42; followed by the word of warning, "Now after two days he departed from there, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet has no honor in his own country [Judea]" (Jn 4:43-44).

1 John 5:1

In the issue of faith logically preceding or following regeneration, Calvinists rely heavily on 1 John 5:1, so we will look at that verse here.

Piper (Calvinist):

We do not bring about the new birth by our faith. God brings about our faith by the new birth. Notice the way John expresses this relationship in 1 John 5:1: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God.” This means that being born of God comes first and believing follows.¹³¹

[Piper, Five Points, Kindle 381-383.]

Grudem (Calvinist):

In an earlier section we saw a beautiful example of the first result of regeneration in a person’s life, when Paul spoke the gospel message to Lydia ... “the Lord opened her heart to give heed.” ... “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” (1 John 5:1 NIV). The perfect participle translated here “is born” could more explicitly be translated “has been born.”¹³²

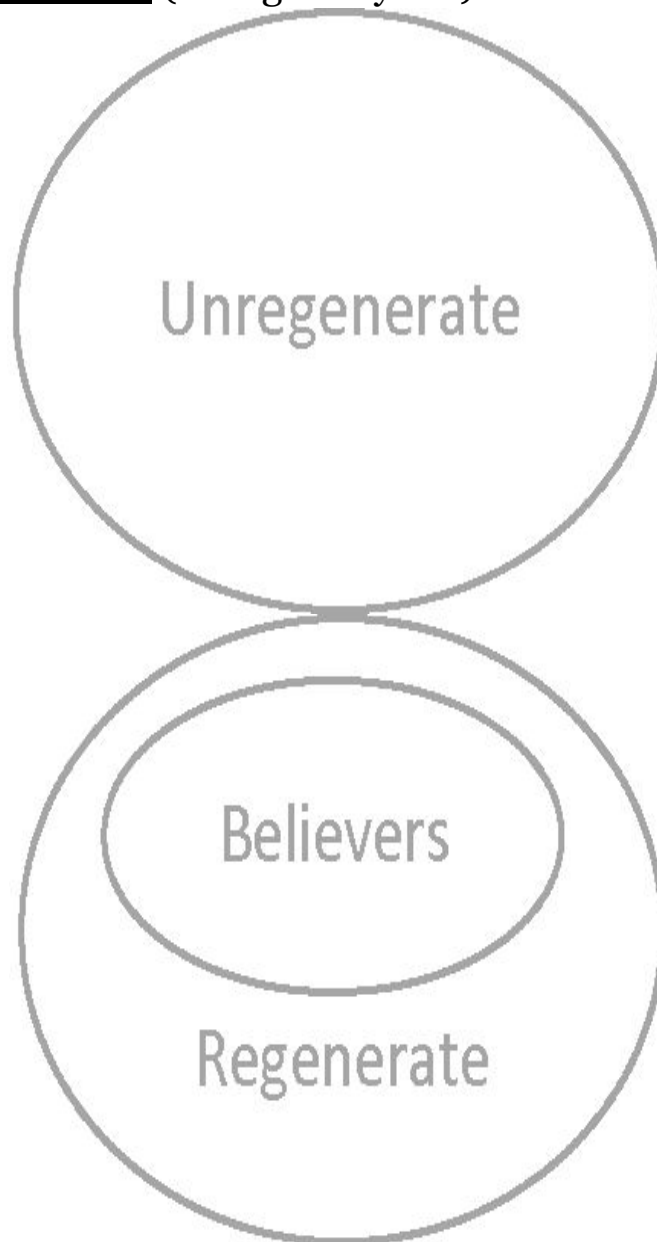
[Grudem, Systematic Theology, 704.]

Notice the reliance on 1 John 5:1 by Piper and Grudem. But 1 John 5:1 is about the continuing faith that is part of sanctification, not about how a person is justified; just like all of 1 John is about what all Christians and only Christians do because of their union with the God of light. Unregenerate men have a free choice to believe, and if they do they thereby instantaneously receive regeneration (eternal life), but from that point on, as regenerate men, they no longer have a free choice whether or not to believe, because they receive the indwelling Spirit at regeneration.

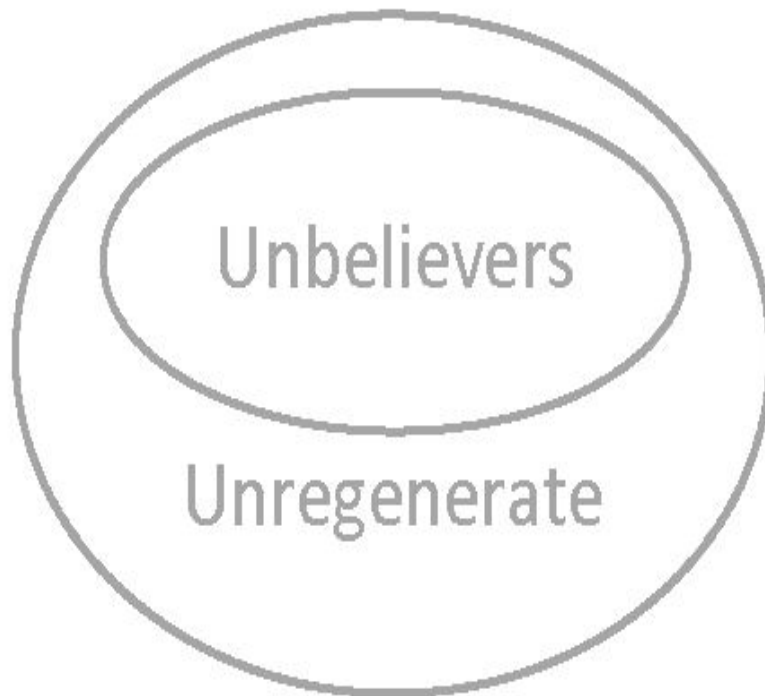
1 Jn. 5:1, “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Messiah is born of God,” means believing is absolute proof of having been born of God. If a single unregenerate person truly believed on Jesus, we couldn’t be sure if a believing person was regenerate as 1 John 5:1 claims.

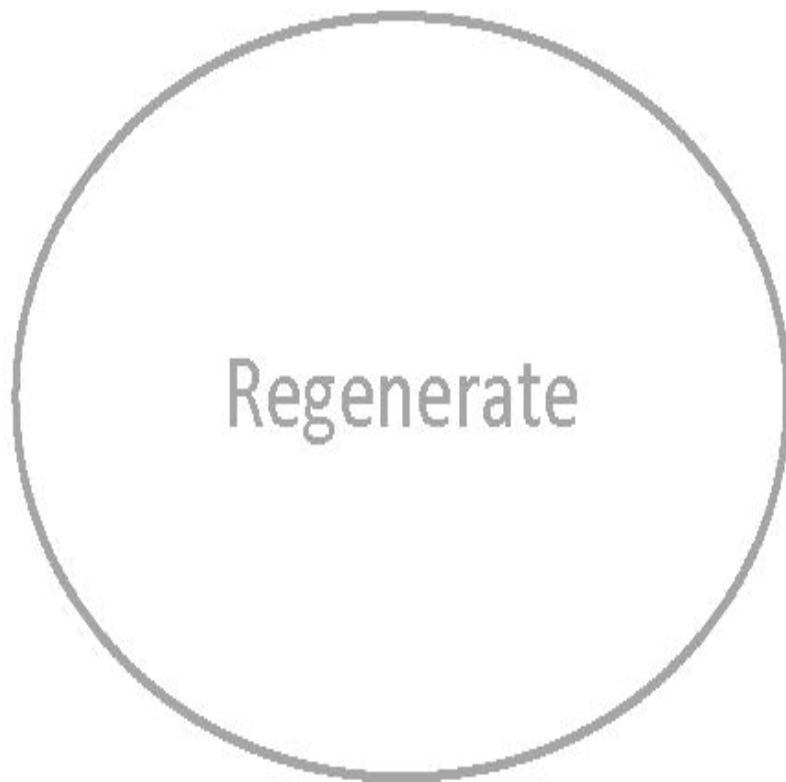
Counter-intuitively, although this verse proves all believers are regenerate, it doesn’t also prove that all

regenerate are believers (though they are).

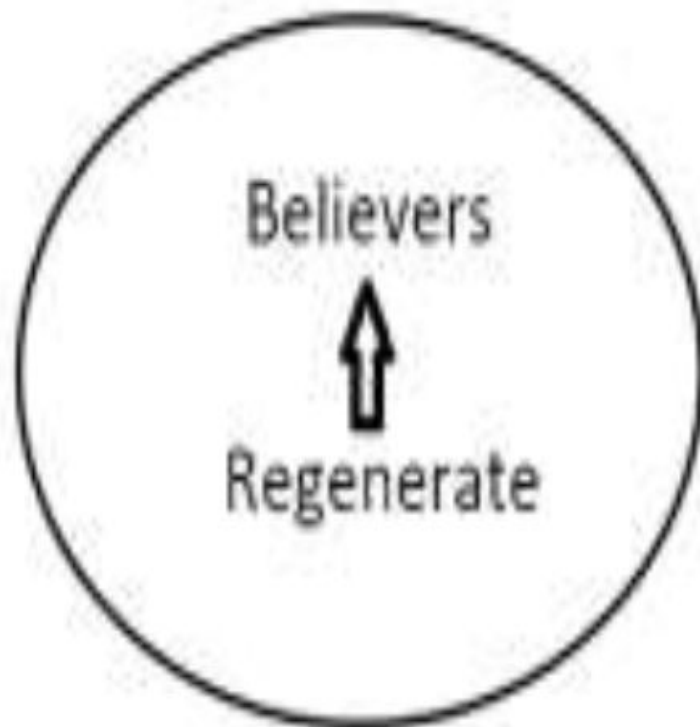
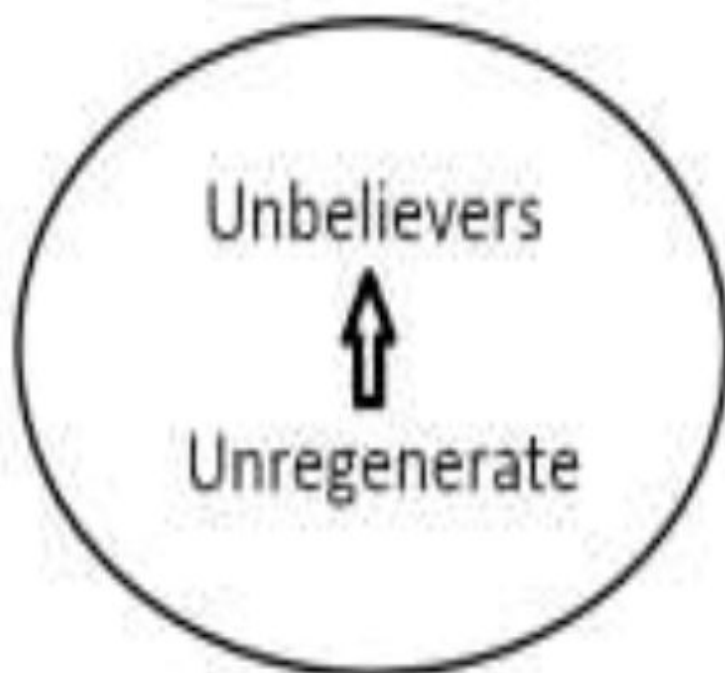


But 1 John 4:3, “Every spirit that doesn’t confess that Jesus Messiah is come in the flesh is not of God,” says unbelief is absolute proof of not having been born of God. If a single unbeliever was regenerate, we couldn’t be sure if an unbeliever was unregenerate, as 1 John 4:3 claims. Counter-intuitively, although this verse proves all unbelievers are unregenerate, it doesn’t also prove that all unregenerate are unbelievers (though they are).





But, combining 1 John 5:1 and 4:3, John logically proves all believers and only believers are regenerate, and all unbelievers and only unbelievers are unregenerate.



1 John 4:3 and 5:1 say a person's practice is always consistent with their position, but they don't say anything about how a person moves from one position to another. Does God enable unbelievers who hear the gospel to choose to believe and thus they become regenerate; or does God regenerate unregenerate people, and thus they become believers? The answer is, "Whoever believes in him [requirement] will... have ... life [receipt of life]" (Jn. 3:16). God enables men to choose to believe when they hear the gospel and then they receive life.



Bultmann (Calvinist):

Man cannot act otherwise than as what he is, but in the Revealer's call there opens up to him the possibility of being otherwise than he was. He can ... be 'born again'. ... In his decision between faith and un-faith a man's being definitively constitutes itself.¹³³

[Bultmann, New Testament, 2.25. in Michaels, Gospel of John, Kindle 1335-1341.]

The Bible says all believers are regenerate, and also says whoever believes becomes a child of God. Conversely, the Bible says all regenerate are believers, but it never says whoever is a child of God becomes a believer.

(Man) As many as received (action) him, to them

(God) Gave he power to become (effect) the sons of God; (Man) To them that believe (action) on his name, (God) Which were born (effect) ... of God," Jn.

1:12-13.

Not as Calvinism teaches ...

(God) As many as are the sons of God, to them

(Man) Gave he power to become receivers (action) of him;

(God) To them which were born ... of God,

(Man) Which became believers (action) on his name.

John Says Faith Precedes Regeneration

Grudem says even though the Bible teaches “be born again and you’ll believe,” we shouldn’t actually preach, “be born again and you’ll believe,” which once again shows Calvinism contradicts the Bible.

Grudem (Calvinist):

By way of application, we should realize that the explanation of the gospel message in Scripture does not take the form of a command, “Be born again and you will be saved,” but rather, “Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved.” This is the consistent pattern in the preaching of the gospel throughout the book of Acts, and also in the descriptions of the gospel given in the Epistles. ... It is true that Jesus tells Nicodemus that he needs to be born again (John 3: 7: “Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born anew’”), but this is not a command to Nicodemus to do something that no one can ever do (that is, give himself new spiritual life) ... A little later, when Jesus begins to speak about the response that is expected from Nicodemus, he speaks about the personal response of faith as the thing necessary: “So must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life” (John 3: 14 - 15).¹³⁴

[Grudem, Systematic Theology, 704, 708.]

I suggest the biblical pattern of preaching “Believe!” instead of “Be born again!” is not because men can’t cause their own births, as Grudem says (though it’s true they can’t; they can only believe); but because regeneration is on the receipt side of the equation, not on the requirement side. “So must the Son of man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him [requirement] will not perish but have eternal life [receipt of regeneration and glorification],” Jn. 3:14-15.

Being born again is not the precondition to receiving the supposed 'gift of faith.' Rather, faith is the precondition to receiving "the gift of God [which] is eternal life," Rom. 6:23. "Repent and be baptized [requirement] every one of you in the name of Jesus Messiah for the remission of sins [receipt of justification], and you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [receipt of regeneration]," Acts 2:38. (See the tables regarding works and rewards versus faith and gifts in the section on Faith in the chapter on The Golden Chain of Romans 8.)

The Bible says faith precedes receipt of the Holy Spirit. "[Step 2] Received ... the Spirit ... [Step 1] by the hearing of faith," Gal. 3:2. "He that [Step 1] believes on me, ... [Step 2] out of his belly will flow rivers of living water, ... the Spirit, which [Step 1] they that believe on him would receive," Jn. 7:38-39.

The biblical sequence is: Step 1) Faith > Step 2) Spiritual Birth & Indwelling Spirit. Though receiving the indwelling Spirit may logically follow regeneration, there's no space for believing the gospel between regeneration and receipt of the indwelling Spirit. "Because you are sons [regeneration], God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts [receipt of indwelling Spirit]," Gal. 4:6. But Calvinism apparently claims: 1) Spiritual Birth > 2) Faith > 3) Indwelling Spirit.

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

Galatians 3:14 declares that we "receive the promise of the Spirit through faith"; and verse 26 says, "ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Likewise, Paul tells the Ephesian believers, "In whom ... after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise ..." (Ephesians 1:13-14). It could not be stated more clearly that a permanent relationship with the Holy Spirit begins only after believing the gospel If regeneration sovereignly comes without and before faith, then the elect, as we have already shown, are regenerated without being saved. ["Saved through faith," Eph. 2:8.] To maintain that unbiblical theory, the Calvinist argues that salvation and regeneration are two distinct events, regeneration coming first by God's sovereign act without any faith, then the gift of faith is given so that the person

can believe the gospel unto salvation. ... But that raises another problem: How could anyone be sovereignly regenerated by God without being born again of the Spirit? Surely regeneration must be synonymous with the new birth. But if Calvinism is true, there must be two new births—one that precedes faith and another that comes by believing the gospel unto the new birth (and salvation).¹³⁵

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 11630-11652.]

I've shown in the preceding section about 1 John 5:1, that the unregenerate always doubt, and the regenerate always believe. That's the topic of John's first epistle. "These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life," 1 Jn. 5:13, because having faith is absolute proof of having been born again. But the topic of John's gospel is how one transfers from being an unregenerate doubter to being a regenerate believer. And John's gospel says coming to saving faith results in regeneration; not regeneration results in coming to saving faith.

Here are 23 verses from his gospel where John says faith precedes regeneration. Although "eternal life" in the gospel of John is both a kind of life, a life from above, i.e. regeneration; and also a duration of life, a life that will last for ever, i.e. future glorification; I only highlight the regeneration aspect in the following verses. The Calvinist Version of each verse may sound like good Calvinist logic, but unfortunately for Calvinists, it's the opposite of what John says.

1 Jn. 1:12. As many as received him [requirement of faith], to them he gave the power to become the sons of God [receipt of regeneration], even to them that believe on his name [requirement of faith].

Calvinist Version. As many as he gave the power to become the sons of God [receipt of regeneration], they received him [came to faith], even they that believe on his name.

1 Jn. 3:14-15. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in him [requirement of faith] will ... have eternal life [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, so that whoever has eternal life [requirement of regeneration] ... will believe in him [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 3:16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in him [requirement of faith] will ... have everlasting life [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, so that whoever has everlasting life [requirement of regeneration] ... will believe in him [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 3:36. He that believes on the Son [requirement of faith] has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration]; and he that doesn't believe the Son [lack of requirement of faith] will not see life [lack of receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that has everlasting life [requirement of regeneration] believes on the Son [receipt of faith]; and he that sees not life [lack of requirement of regeneration], will not believe the Son [lack of receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 5:24. He that hears my word and believes on him that sent me [requirement of faith], has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration], and ... is passed from death to life [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that has everlasting life [requirement of regeneration] and ... is passed from death to life [requirement of regeneration], hears my word and believes on him that sent me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 6:35. He that believes on me [requirement of faith] will never thirst [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that never thirsts [requirement of regeneration] will believe on me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 6:40. Everyone which sees the Son and believes on him [requirement of faith], will have everlasting life [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. Every one which has everlasting life [requirement of regeneration], will believe on him [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 6:47. He that believes on me [requirement of faith] has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that has everlasting life [requirement of regeneration] believes on me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 6:57. He that eats me [requirement of faith], even he will live by me [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that lives forever [requirement of regeneration] will eat me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 6:58. He that eats of this bread [requirement of faith] will live for ever [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that will live forever [requirement of regeneration] eats of this bread [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 7:37-38. He that believes on me [requirement of faith], as the scripture has said, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that out of his belly flow rivers of living water [requirement of regeneration], as the scripture has said, will believe on me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 7:39. This he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on him [requirement of faith] will receive [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. This he spoke of the Spirit which they that have [requirement of regeneration] will believe on him [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 8:23-24. If you don't believe that I am he [lack of requirement of faith], you will die in your sins [lack of receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. If you are dead in your sins [lack of requirement of regeneration], you will not believe that I am he [lack of receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 9:38. He said, “Lord, I believe [requirement of faith].” And he worshipped him [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He worshiped him [requirement of regeneration]. And he said, “Lord, I believe [receipt of faith].”

1 Jn. 10:38. Though you don’t believe me [lack of requirement of faith], believe the works [requirement of faith], so that you may know [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. Though you don’t know me [lack of requirement of regeneration], know the works [requirement of regeneration], so that you may believe me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 11:25. He that believes in me [requirement of faith], ... will ... live [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that ... lives [requirement of regeneration], will believe in me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 11:26. Whoever ... believes in me [requirement of faith], will never die [receipt of regeneration]. Do you believe this?

Calvinist Version. Whoever is not dead [requirement of regeneration], will ... believe in me [receipt of faith]. Are you alive?

1 Jn. 12:36. Believe in the light [requirement of faith], so that you may be the children of light [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. Be the children of the light [requirement of regeneration], so that you may believe in the light [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 12:46. Whoever believes on me [requirement of faith], will not abide in darkness [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. Whoever doesn’t abide in darkness [requirement of regeneration], will believe on me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 14:11-12. He that believes on me [requirement of faith], the works that I do, he will do also [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. He that also does the works I do [requirement of regeneration], will believe on me [receipt of faith].

1 Jn. 16:27. The Father himself loves you [receipt of regeneration], because you ... have believed that I came out from God [requirement of faith].

Calvinist Version. You have believed that I came out from God [receipt of faith], because the Father loves you [requirement of regeneration].

1 Jn. 17:20-21. [I pray] for ... them ... which will believe on me [requirement of faith], ... so that they all may be one [receipt of regeneration]; ... so that the world may believe.

Calvinist Version. [I pray] for ... them that are one [requirement of regeneration], so that they all may believe on me [receipt of faith]; ... so that the elect may believe.

1 Jn. 20:31. These are written so that you may believe [requirement of faith]; ... and so that believing [requirement of faith] you may have life [receipt of regeneration].

Calvinist Version. These are written so that you may have life [requirement of regeneration], ... and so that having life [requirement of regeneration], you may believe [receipt of faith].

The message of John the evangelist and the gospel, is that all unbelievers who believe will receive life, “these are written so that you [unbelievers] may believe, ... and so that [by] believing you may have life” (Jn. 20:31). Calvinism teaches an opposing and gospel-hindering message, “these are written because [some of] you [unbelievers] have life, ... so that [by] having life you may believe.”

Jn. 4b-5, Episode 2. The Word of Life

This episode is about what the word of Jesus (the Word) can and can't accomplish in regards to spiritual regeneration and physical resurrection. There are two narratives in chapters 4b and 5a, followed by a two-part discourse in 5b and 5c that explains the narratives.

JOHN 4B-5. PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL LIFE	
Narratives	Discourses
1) <u>4:45-54 Nobleman & Son</u> Life: Spiritual Healing	1) <u>5:19-24 Father and Son</u>
	Life: Willing Obedience
2) <u>5:1-5:18 The Invalid</u>	2) <u>5:25-47 The Resurrection</u>
Resurrection: Physical Healing	Resurrection: Unwilling Obedience

Ep. 2, Nar. 1. The Nobleman and His Son

Jn. 4:45-50. There was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went to him, and begged him that he would come down, and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then Jesus said to him, “Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe.” The nobleman said to him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.” Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your son lives.” And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him, and he went his way.

Calvinist Version. Then Jesus said to him, “Even if you see signs and wonders you can’t believe.” But the Father altered the man’s nature so he would be willing, and he believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him.

The nobleman’s son couldn’t come to Jesus, so the nobleman begged Jesus to come and heal him. The nobleman was a man of high social status, wealth, and influence; but Jesus treated him somewhat disdainfully to help him deal with his personal obstacles to faith. The man could only repeat his plea for help out of love for his son. He was willing to face any embarrassment before the onlookers. He humbled himself, and is only called “the man,” vs. 50, and “the father,” vs. 53, instead of “the nobleman” vs. 46, after this.

Jesus told him, “Go your way. Your son lives,” (vs. 50). The man had no choice but to go, because Jesus commanded it. But he made his own choice to believe. Jesus didn’t alter the nobleman’s desires or will to cause him to believe. He didn’t alter the nobleman at all before he believed; all his healing was performed on his son. The nobleman didn’t even get to see his son healed before he believed.

But he “believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him, and he went his way” (vs. 50).

Jesus does everything his Father does. As the Father sent his Word into the world to heal it from afar, so the Son sent his word from afar to heal the man’s son. But the main character in the narrative is not the nobleman’s son who was healed physically by the power of the Word of God, but the nobleman himself who was healed spiritually by faith, and whose whole family came to faith also.

Jn. 4:51-5:1. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, “Your son lives.” Then he enquired of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives.” And he believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee. After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

The son was healed at about 1:00 pm, “the seventh hour” (vs. 52) after dawn. We don’t know for sure where Cana was, but Nazareth is about 20 miles from Capernaum, so it might have been about a 7 hour walk. Perhaps it was after dusk when the servants coming from Capernaum met him coming back there, and that’s why they said the fever broke “yesterday,” (vs. 52) since each Jewish day begins at evening.

Jesus had probably already moved his family to Capernaum back in John 2, because Joseph had probably already died. “After this [the wedding in Cana] he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples. And they continued there not many days [before going up to the Passover]. And the Jews’ Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,” Jn. 2:12-13. So it was probably a blessing to Jesus’ family to have the nobleman’s family as friends in Capernaum. “He [the nobleman] believed, and his whole house,” Jn. 4:53.

Jesus had made this trip from Judea to Galilee when “the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John” (Jn. 4:1). This miracle was only the “second miracle [in Galilee] that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee” (vs. 54), the first one having been the private miracle at the wedding in Cana. Jesus must have returned to his Judean ministry after this, because he didn’t start his Galilean ministry until “when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee” (Mt. 4:12). When Matthew says “And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum” in Matthew 4:13, he may have been summarizing the move Jesus had already made to Capernaum back in John 2.

The next chapter in John, chapter 5, which takes place in Jerusalem, begins the rejection of Jesus’ ministry. So Mt. 4:12-11:2; Mk. 1:14-2:23; and Lu. 4:14-6:1 probably all took place between the end of John 4 and the beginning of John 5. The “feast of the Jews” that Jesus “went up to” in 5:1, may have been the feast of Purim, thirty days before the feast of Pentecost in John 6.

Ep. 2, Nar. 2. The Invalid at the Pool

Jn. 5:2-9. Now there is at Jerusalem ... a pool ... having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty eight years. When Jesus saw him lying, and knew that he had been now a long time in that condition, he said to him, "Are you willing to be made whole?" The impotent man answered him, "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool." ... Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk." And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked, and the same day was the sabbath.

Calvinist Version. In these five porches lay a great multitude of totally depraved people. Jesus sovereignly chose one, and made him willing to believe. And immediately the man believed.

The man lying near the pool was so weak he couldn't even get into the pool. He couldn't come to Jesus, but Jesus came to him. Likewise, men can't come to God, but he sent the Savior to us. Calvinism is right that unregenerate men are spiritually weak and impotent.

Jesus did sovereignly choose a man to heal; but physically, not spiritually. Jesus asked, "Are you willing to be made whole?" The man's answer was ambivalent. Jesus didn't change the man's will, as Calvinism teaches he does. He healed the man physically, without his consent, but couldn't heal him spiritually, because the man wasn't willing.

There are things God can't do. He can't sin, or lie, or do anything that is logically contradictory. And he can't directly or indirectly cause a man to genuinely decide anything, because what is caused by another is not decided by oneself.

Jn. 5:10-11. The Jews therefore said to him that was cured, "It is the sabbath day. It is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He that made me whole, the same said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'" Then they asked him, "What man is that which said to you, 'Take up your bed and

walk?” And he that was healed didn’t know who it was, for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

The rabbis were so focused on the man’s apparent violation of the sabbath, they couldn’t rejoice he’d been healed from a long illness. When they confronted the healed invalid about carrying his bed on the sabbath, he said the man who healed him made him do it. He’s right. Jesus hadn’t said, “If you wouldn’t mind, I’d prefer you take up your bed and walk.” The man had no choice. By his command, Jesus compelled a man desirous of community approval to face punishment by carrying his bed around on the sabbath; but he couldn’t compel him to believe. The man hadn’t focused his gratitude on his benefactor, and Jesus had slipped into the crowd before he thought to get his name.

Jn. 5:14-15. Afterwards Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “Behold, you are made whole. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come to you. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

Jesus came to the man a second time and warned him to “sin no more” (vs. 14), implying that, although most sicknesses aren’t due to sin, this man’s had been. He may have often longed to get back to that sin during the years he lay disabled. Jesus warned him that something worse than thirty-eight years of disability could happen to him. But there’s no record of the man discussing the issue with Jesus, or asking for help or advice. He was focused on getting back to the Pharisees as quickly as possible to turn Jesus in to improve his own standing with them.

He was very conscious of community opinion. Maybe he had been envying others who were respected and functioning freely in society during the years he was disabled. Whereas the nobleman, a man of status and influence, humbled himself after he met Jesus; the disabled man, sought to exalt himself in society after he met Jesus, and he was willing to throw his benefactor under the bus to do so.

Jn. 5:16. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

The rabbis then, like today, claim God gave Moses an ‘oral law’ at Sinai along with the written Torah, which they recorded in the Talmud around 300 AD. The oral law forbids medical attention, like setting a broken bone, on the sabbath day, except in life threatening situations. It’s not biblical to say Israel rejected the Messiah because Jesus offered a spiritual kingdom, while they were expecting a physical kingdom. Jesus offered a physical kingdom just like they were expecting. The Bible says Israel rejected Jesus because Jesus rejected their ‘oral law,’ especially regarding the sabbath (Mt. 12:1-14, Mk. 2:23-3:6, Lk. 6:1-11). They also rejected him because he claimed to be God.

Ep. 2, Disc. 1. The Father and the Son

Verse 17 begins the first discourse which is about the Father and the Son.

Jn. 5:17-18. Jesus answered them, “My Father works until now, and I work.” Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but also said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Jesus claimed his Father had chosen to work six days and then rest one at the time of creation; and therefore Jesus had the authority to work the seventh if he wanted. After all, we know from the prologue, he was the one doing the work at creation. “All things were made by him,” Jn. 1:3. The Jews rightly interpreted his statement to mean he was claiming equality with God, and that’s the claim Jesus went on to expound on in the rest of the chapter.

The issue of the divinity of Jesus is important, because according to John, one must believe he’s both Messiah and the Son of God to be saved. “These are written so [by them] you can believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and so that [by] believing, you can have life through his name,” Jn. 20:31.

And you can’t say “I believe he’s the Son of God; I just don’t believe he’s God.” We became sons of God when God gave us his nature

through his indwelling Spirit when we believed and were joined to Messiah. “You are all the children of God by faith in Messiah Jesus, for ... you ... have been baptized [immersed, joined] into Messiah,” Gal. 3:26-27. But we didn’t come into being by that, and it didn’t make us worthy of worship.

And you can’t say, “I believe he’s very special, the greatest being next to God, but not God.” John said his “shoe’s latchet [we are] not worthy to unloose” (Jn. 1:27). If I’m a personal valet, I untie my master’s shoes because of the position and role I take on, not because I’m inherently unworthy to be in the master’s position. But even if Jesus was an angel, as the Jehovah’s Witnesses teach, we aren’t unworthy to untie angels’ shoes either. “I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then he said to me, “See that you don’t do it, for I am your fellow-servant, ... and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God,” Rev. 22:8-9.

And you can’t say he’s the Son because he came into being by God giving birth to him, because everything reproduces “after his kind” (Gen. 1:11, 21, 24, 25), and there is only “one God” (1 Tim. 2:5).

The only option left is that Jesus is the Son of God because he’s part of God. “The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one,” 1 Jn. 5:7. He’s the part of God that functions as a Son does to a Father, hearing, obeying, being sent by, etc. “The gospel of God” is concerning his Son Jesus Messiah our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,” Rom. 1:1-3. He already was the Son before he was made flesh at Jesus birth. “The Son of God is come, ... and we are in him that is true, even [by being] in his Son Jesus Messiah. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols,” 1 Jn. 5:20-21.

So why doesn’t the Bible just come out and clearly say “Jesus is God?” Because technically, Jesus is part of God, not all of God. It’s true that my body is Wayne, but it’s not all there is of Wayne. If you’re going to refer to just one part of a man as the whole man, the

world may say, “We need to hire some more bodies,” but the Bible says, “We were in all in the ship two hundred sixty and sixteen souls,” Acts 27:37. Or the Bible will refer to the Father as God, because the Father is primary in the godhead as the soul is primary in man.

This issue is also of special importance to the Jewish people. The deity of Jesus is one of the greatest obstacles to their faith in Messiah, because the rabbis hide the Torah’s teaching about the Angel of the LORD. Jewish people today think Christians worship three Gods.

But the nature of God, as three-in-one, is in the first three verses of the Bible. “In the beginning God [the Father] [Elohim, “im” indicating plural in Hebrew] created the heaven and the earth, ... and the Spirit of God [the Spirit] moved on the face of the waters, and God [the Son, the Word] said, “Let there be light: and there was light,” Gen. 1:1-3. God, the Father, is transcendent and can’t be seen or heard, so the Targum Neofiti translates Genesis 1:1 as “From the beginning the Son of the Lord perfected the heaven and the earth.”

The Shema recited in synagogue services says, “Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one [אֶחָד, echad] Lord,” Deut. 6:4. But the Hebrew word for “one” there, is “echad,” which can indicate a plural unity, as in “a man ... will cleave to his wife, and they will be one [echad] flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Man was created in the image of God. So it’s not surprising man was created as soul, body, and spirit, as God is Father, Son, and Spirit. My spirit is Wayne, and my body is Wayne; there are not three Waynes. However, whereas my body is dead if my spirit is in a different place, each part of God is self-sufficient as well as interdependent. And whereas man can’t become God, God can become man; as God the Son did. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” Jn. 1:14.

Jn. 5:19-20. Then answered Jesus and said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do. For whatever things he does, these also the Son does likewise. For the Father loves

the Son, and shows him all things that he himself does. And he will show him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

If Jesus was guilty of violating the sabbath, then so was the Father. The Jewish leaders accepted the healed man's defense that Jesus made him carry his bed on the sabbath, but they didn't accept Jesus' defense that the Father made him heal the man on the sabbath.

The revelations in this passage about the relationship between the Father and Son are probably some of the most important of all time. The Son is limited to doing only what the Father does, "the Son can do nothing of himself, but [only] what he sees the Father do." But the Son also does everything the Father does, "for the Father loves the Son, and shows him all things that he himself does." A being who does only and also everything God does, is ... well, God.

And Jesus said his Father in heaven would do even greater works through him on earth for their sakes, "that you may marvel" (vs. 20). One of which will be his resurrection of Lazarus in chapter 11.

Jn. 5:21-23. For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom he will. For the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son, so that all men would honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son, honors not the Father which has sent him.

The Son "quickens whom he will" (vs. 21), but only in the physical realm, "as the Father raises up the dead" (vs. 21), at the physical resurrection. Jesus demonstrated his ability to quicken "whom he will" by picking the lame man out of all the others at the pool and healing him physically. But he didn't have the ability to make him choose to believe, and so the man reported Jesus to the authorities.

The Father gave Jesus the works of: 1) resurrecting the dead, and 2) executing judgment, so men would honor the Son equally with the Father. Jesus gives "life and ... light" (Jn. 1:4). Giving men knowledge of the truth (light), also makes them accountable for "judgment ... according to truth" (Rom. 2:2).

Since the Father wants men to honor the Son equally to himself, and sent the Son as his messenger and witness, then failing to honor the Son is failing to honor the Father, and that will result in judgment. There's only one way to avoid judgment.

Jn. 5:24. He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, has everlasting life, and will not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life.

Calvinist Version. He that has everlasting life, will believe on him that sent me.

This chapter talks about hearing and believing; the next chapter will talk about seeing and believing. "Every one which sees the Son and believes on him [has] everlasting life," Jn. 6:40. In regards to physical life, God "quicken[s] whom he will" (vs. 21), but in regards to spiritual life "he that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me has everlasting life" (vs. 24). Jesus didn't compel the nobleman to believe, but only helped him overcome his personal obstacles to faith, and provided the faith-enabling words, "Your son lives." Likewise, "as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Messiah's stead, be reconciled to God," 2 Cor. 5:20. God can't justly give someone life who hasn't been justified by faith, and he can't justly cause someone to believe.

Receiving spiritual life is the only way to escape condemnation after the resurrection. Faith results in justification "will not come into condemnation" and regeneration "is passed from death to life" (vs. 24). If you hear his words and believe now, before you die physically, you are "passed from [spiritual] death to [spiritual] life" (vs. 24), but there's no chance of that happening when you hear his words after death.

Ep. 2, Nar. 2. The Resurrection

Verse 25 begins the second discourse about physical resurrection through Jesus' word, either to blessing or judgment.

Jn. 5:25-27. The hour is coming, and now is, when [all] the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear [both saved and unsaved] will live [physically]. For as the Father has life in himself, so has he given to the Son to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Calvinist Version. The hour is coming, and now is, when they that live will hear.

The “hour is coming” (vs. 25) in the future at the resurrection. And the hour “now is” (vs. 25) when Jesus will call Lazarus back to life in chapter 11. Since the Father gave Jesus “life in himself” (vs. 26), Jesus can give it to others. And since he’s both God and man, he’s perfectly suited to be the judge of all men.

Jn. 5:28-29. Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves will hear his voice, and will come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation.

Hearing doesn’t need to be “mixed with faith” (Heb. 4:2) for the resurrection, because that’s a physical event that Jesus can righteously force to happen with his word. At that time, “all that are in the graves will hear his voice, and will come forth” (vs. 28), both those who had believed before they died, and those who hadn’t. God’s word will be effectual for both, without fail and without faith, because it’s a physical resurrection.

God can compel matter, but not wills. Hearing can ‘cause’ physical resurrection, but it can only ‘enable’ faith. Jesus could only help remove obstacles to the faith of the nobleman by instruction (5:48), but couldn’t cause it; just like he will not be able to cause any of the dead he raises to believe, but only judge them. The very voice they were hearing and disputing against at that moment, is the one each will someday hear calling them (and us) either “to the resurrection of life” (vs. 29), or “to the resurrection of damnation” (vs. 29).

Before we die, faith determines whether or not we're justified. At the judgments after the resurrection, only deeds matter. The good deeds of believers determine the amount of rewards they will receive forever (1 Cor. 3:14,15); and the bad deeds of unbelievers will determine the amount of punishment they will receive. Believers will be resurrected a thousand years earlier than unbelievers, so they can enjoy the Messianic Kingdom. Unbelievers will be resurrected and judged for their evil works after the Messianic Kingdom.

Rev. 20:6-15. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection. On such the second death has no power, but they will ... reign with [Messiah] a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, ... the dead, small and great, [stood] before God. And the books were opened, ... and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works This is the second death.

Jn. 5:30. I can of my own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me.

No other man ever lived in perfect dependence and in perfect obedience to God at all times. This is how Jesus manifested "his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father," Jn. 1:14. This is how the apostles saw "the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man," Jn. 1:51.

Jesus' judgment is perfect because he knows all things by what he hears from the Father through the Spirit. "The spirit of the Lord will rest upon him, ... and he will not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness he will judge," Is. 11:2-4.

Jn. 5:31-32. If I bear witness of myself [apart from the Father's witness], my witness is not true. There is another [the Father] that bears witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesses of me is true.

Since Jesus “can of [his] own self do nothing” (vs. 30), and only says what he hears from the Father, he can’t bear witness of himself, apart from the Father’s witness of him.

Verse 31 begins to explain why some people, like the nobleman believe, and especially why some, like the lame man, don’t believe. It talks about obstacles to faith, and why most people don’t, not can’t, believe.

What are witnesses for? To help you believe. “John [the Baptist] ... came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, so that all men through him can believe,” Jn. 1:6-7. God’s method of working is through witnesses, for the sake of “all men,” so they “may believe,” not through secret, non- biblical covenants, so only some, must believe.

Jn. 5:33-35. Witness 1: John the Baptist. You sent to John [Jn. 1:19-28], and he bore witness to the truth. But I don’t receive testimony from man [John]; but these things I say, so that you may be saved. He was a burning and a shining light, and you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

Calvinist Version. These things I say, even though you can’t be saved. John was a shining light, but you couldn’t rejoice in his light.

Unlike the lame man, Jesus is not concerned about what men think of him, except as to how it affects their welfare. “I don’t receive testimony from man,” vs. 34. Nevertheless, Jesus references John the Baptist’s testimony of him, “so that you may be saved” (vs. 34). Jesus didn’t teach, as Calvin did, that men don’t have the ability to believe and be saved.

The rabbis in Jerusalem had been “willing ... to rejoice in his [John the Baptist’s] light,” though only “for a season” (vs. 35), even while they were unregenerate. Likewise, Paul had been able to “delight in the law of God” (Rom. 7:22) during his years as a Pharisee, even while he was unregenerate, though he was couldn’t understand and obey it.

John the Baptist had witnessed to the rabbis when they had sent a delegation to examine him.

Jn. 1:19-30. And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” And he confessed, ... “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, ... “Are you that prophet [like Moses, Deut. 18:15]?” And he answered, “No.” ... And they asked him, ... “Why do you baptize then, if you’re not that Messiah, nor Elijah, neither that prophet [like Moses]?” John answered them, saying, ... “There stands one among you, ... who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose ... After me comes a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me.”

Usually, the person coming earlier has greater honor, like parents have more honor than their children. But John the Baptist testified the one being revealed after him preexisted before him. He also said he wasn't worthy to unloose the shoe latchet of the one he was announcing. Now, the Bible teaches submission to authority, and especially godly kings like David are worthy of great respect, but no human is 'unworthy' to untie the shoe of another human. God is the only one whom we're unworthy to even be in the presence of. So John testified that Jesus is God. And the Pharisees believed John to be a prophet,
at least for awhile.

Jn. 5:36. Witness 2: My Works. But I have greater witness than that of John, for the works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me.

As the Pharisee Nicodemus had said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that you do, unless God is with him,” Jn. 3:2. And as Jesus will later say, “If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they would not have sin,” Jn. 15:23.

The rabbis never challenged the authenticity of a single miracle Jesus did, because they were too obviously authentic, unlike those of the so-called faith-healers today. So instead the rabbis claimed

the source of his miracles was the power of Satan. “This fellow doesn’t cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils,” Mt. 12:24. The Talmud collaborates this. “On Passover Eve they hung ... Jesus the Nazarene [on a tree] ... because he practiced sorcery [and] incited people to idol worship [i.e. he claimed divinity],” Sanhedrin 43a.

What made the rabbis think he “practiced sorcery” instead of doing miracles by the power of God? Because they had already rejected him for opposing the oral law, and for claiming to be the Son of God.

Talmud (Shabbat 147a). Nor may one reset a break in a bone [or a dislocated] hand or foot [on the Sabbath].

Matt. 12:9-14. They asked him, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days?” that they might accuse him. ... He said to the man, “Stretch forth your hand.” And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole like the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they could destroy him.

Jesus was a threat to the careers they had built on their expertise in the oral law. Like the man who had been disabled, they put community approval above their desire to know God.

Jn. 5:37-38. Witness 3: The Father. And the Father himself, which has sent me, has borne witness of me. You have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. [It is evident] you don’t have his word abiding in you; for whom he has sent, him you don’t believe.

Calvinist Version. You don’t have his word abiding in you; and therefore whom he has sent, him you can’t believe.

“He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (Jn. 3:13) is the only one who has and still was hearing the Father’s voice and seeing his shape. All other men need to rely on the word God spoke through his prophets and recorded in the scriptures. But the word God sent through prophecy is consistent

with the living Word he sent from heaven. Therefore, if “you don’t believe” (vs. 38) on the one “whom he has sent” (vs. 38) it’s 100% proof you’re unregenerate, and, “you don’t have his word abiding in you” (vs. 38). To say “his word is not in” someone (1 Jn. 1:10), is synonymous with saying the person is unsaved and unregenerate. But if you’re unregenerate, it’s because “you don’t believe” (vs. 38), not because “you can’t believe.” God sends witnesses “so that all men ... may believe” (Jn. 1:7). And once an unregenerate man believes, he is regenerated, and from then on his continuing belief is 100% proof he’s regenerate.

Jn. 5:39. Witness 4: The Scriptures. Search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.

Jesus was trying to help the rabbis believe. An intellectual consideration of the scriptures can result in faith. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,” Rom. 10:17.

Ps. 119:25, 50, 107, 114. Quicken [חיה, give life, ‘chaim,’ to] me according to your word ... I trust in your word ... Your word has quickened me
Quicken me, O Lord, according to your word ... I hope in your word.

Jn. 5:40-42. And you aren’t willing to come to me, that you may have life. I receive not honor from men. But I know you, that you don’t have the love of God in you.

Calvinist Version. And you can’t believe on me, that you may have life.

Unlike Calvinists, Jesus only told people “you aren’t willing to come to me,” not “you can’t believe.” Jesus has no need to receive honor from men to validate who he is. Their lack of honor towards him doesn’t harm him in any way, but it harms them to the ultimate degree, because their hatred of God’s Son is evidence they don’t love God.

Jn. 5:43. I have come in my Father’s name, and you don’t receive me. If another will come in his own name, him you will receive.

Calvinist Version. I have come in my Father's name, and you can't receive me.

If he had come as a man, with a Ph.D., or even an associates degree, they would have found a place in their system for him. But since he came from God, Jesus said, “you don't receive me” (vs. 43), not “you can't receive me.”

Jn. 5:44. How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only?

Calvinist Version. You can't believe, which receive honor one of another.

He didn't say "you can't believe," but rather, "how can you believe" if you care more about what men think about you than what God does?

Sproul (Calvinist):

We believers must ask ourselves why we have come to faith while many of our friends have not. Did we exercise faith in Christ because we are more intelligent than they are? ... Are we better or more virtuous than our friends? 136

[Sproul, Reformed Theology, 177.]

Piper (Calvinist):

I rarely meet Christians who want to take credit for their conversion. . If I ask . "Why did you believe . when you heard the gospel, but your friends didn't," . very few believers answer that question by saying: "Because I was wiser or smarter or more spiritual or better trained or more humble." 137

[Piper, Five Points, Kindle 249-252.]

We all make decisions that differ from other people. One man wants the immediate pleasure of spending his money now; another forgoes immediate pleasure and saves his money for the future. And when we repeat choices over and over they become habits, and habits become character and a way of life.

But free will means, at any moment, the man who has been spending can decide to save, and visa versa. Free will enables us to make altruistic and sacrificial choices, even choosing suffering, and labor, to do what's right, or help others. "Moses, when he was come to years, ... [chose] rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," Heb. 11:24-25. We can even choose what we think is worst for us if we want.

Sproul (Calvinist) says Adam's sin "remains a bona fide and impenetrable mystery to us."¹³⁸ [R. C. Sproul, Can I Know God's

Will? (Crucial Questions Series Book 4), (Reformation Trust Publishing), Kindle Edition, 54.] The Calvinist thinks God couldn't have created Adam with the desire to sin, because then God would be the source of sin; and yet thinks Adam couldn't have decided to sin without it being caused by his nature. (Of course the answer to the Calvinist dilemma is that free will is not under obligation to act according to one's nature.)

Sproul agrees with Jonathan Edwards (Calvinist) that "we must choose according to our strongest desires of the moment."¹³⁹ [Sproul, God's Will, 37.] This is identical to materialist scientists who say all our decisions are determined by the chain of atoms affecting atoms all the way back to the origin of the universe.

But free choice is what makes a will different from matter. Every decision is a break in the chain of causation, where cause becomes only influence, and a small point of cocreation that God has shared with his creatures. Adam's sin isn't an impenetrable mystery. After considering available information, potential consequences, our desires, etc. we still have the ability to choose even contrary to our analysis and desires and perceived wellbeing.

Our natures influence us persistently, so that over time our general way of life will always match our natures. But we will always make some individual decisions that contradict our natures. And by "the gospel of Messiah [which] is the power of God to salvation to every one that believes" (Rom. 1:16), we need only one moment of faith to give us justification, new birth, and a transformed nature. God enables, but doesn't cause faith; he only tries to persuade.

"As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Messiah's stead, be reconciled to God," 2 Cor. 5:20. During those moments when an unregenerate sinner hears, or reads, or thinks about the gospel, while being influenced by both his depraved nature and the enabling Holy Spirit, he has his truest free choice in life, of whether or not to come to faith.

If Adam and Eve had passed the test of not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God would have let them eat from the tree of life, and thus confirmed them in holiness. Even the angels were confirmed in their holiness or unholiness after they made their decisions. But all men and angels are required to have one genuine test first; not something God determines for them.

Jesus chose an invalid out of the many sick people at the pool (vs. 6), and healed him physically (vs. 8-9), even though he was unwilling (vs. 6-8); but he couldn't heal him spiritually (vs. 14-15). The man rejected Jesus because he put acceptance by men above acceptance by God, and reported Jesus to the religious authorities (vs. 15).

The invalid wanted to be accepted in society. He wanted "honor from men," (vs. 41) so "how [could he] believe" (vs. 44)? He could have focused on his physical deliverance, and the God who healed him, to motivate himself to be able to endure the loss of social acceptance.

Jn. 5:45-46. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one that accuses you, even Moses, in whom you trust. For had you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me.

The rabbis condemned Jesus out of zeal for the sabbath and Moses, but there's no way they could have been more against Moses and God than to condemn the "Messiah, the chosen of God" (Lu. 23:35).

Moses had written about a being called the Angel of the Lord, who looked like an angel, and looked like a man, because angels look like men in the Bible, since only Cherubim and Seraphim have wings. The five books of Moses are filled from beginning to end with appearances of this being; walking, talking, eating, even wrestling with men.

But the rabbis didn't believe Moses, so in their translations, called targums, of the Bible into Aramaic, the common language of the people after the Babylonian captivity, they changed anthropomorphic words to "protect" the people. See "Appendix 2. The Angel of the LORD" for more information.

The Talmud says, "The congregation reads a particular Torah portion every Shabbat. And during the week prior to each Shabbat, one is required to read the [Hebrew] Bible text of the weekly portion twice, and the translation [the rabbinically-approved Targum Onkelos] once," Talmud, Berakhot 8a. The Targum Onkelos, possibly translated by someone named Onkelos, is a literal translation into Aramaic, but still has about 10,000 changes from the Hebrew text.

Drazin:

There are 1,650 of these modifications, about sixteen percent of the total changes, ... [where] our targumist shuns anthropomorphisms. There are 188 places in the Pentateuch where he adds the term *memra* [meaning word or wisdom]. ... In Deuteronomy, for example, it is not God corporeally "fighting" (1:30, 3:22, ... 20:4), or "moving" (31:6), "demanding" (18:19), "charging" (11:1), "taking" (4:37), "helping" (2:7, 20:1, 23:15, 31:8, 31:23), or even making the world (33:27), but it is His *memra* that is doing so ... He inserts *yekara*, "glory," into twenty-one texts in the Pentateuch. Instead of God appearing, [his glory appears]. ... He places *Shekhinah*, "divine presence," into his translation for the same purpose forty-nine times when the Bible asserts that God is "dwelling." ... [He] inserts *qadam*, "before," in front of "God," 659 times ... to soften an anthropomorphic portrayal. Thus, for example, the words of the Israelites were not heard by God in Deuteronomy 1:34, which may suggest that a corporeal being with ears listened to the

Israelites, but the words are heard “before the Lord.” ... Similarly, our translator spells the Hebrew Elohim, which is in the ... plural in Scripture, by replacing Elohim with the Tetragrammaton, the Hebrew four-letter noun for God, ... 204 times.¹⁴⁰

[Drazin, Nachmanides, Kindle 1629-1688.]

But how do we know what God is like apart from the Bible? We have to accept what the Bible says regardless any difficulties. If the Bible is of divine origin, there has to be difficulties and it has to be different than man’s philosophies. How can anyone intentionally hide scriptural difficulties from people, who might interpret them differently than we do, but might also be right. Biblically, the majority is always wrong.

Rambam (Maimonides) wrote something he called the “13 Principles Of Faith” around 1150 AD. Principle 3 says God is not corporeal. His 13 Principles were made into the Yigdal which is sung at the beginning of the morning and end of the evening synagogue services today, except in mystical leaning Hasidic groups.

If neither God, nor any part or person of God can be corporeal, per Principle #3 that everyone is required to say every week, then Jesus couldn’t be part of the Godhead. But John says, “Hereby you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Messiah is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that doesn’t confess that Jesus Messiah is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist” (1 Jn. 4:2-3).

If the rabbis had accepted Moses words the way they were written about the Angel of the Lord, with all their attendant difficulties, they would have been prepared to listen to Messiah as he spoke about his relation to the Father. But since they had already made their decisions about how to handle Moses words, it was possible, but unlikely, they would treat Jesus’ words any differently.

Jn. 5:47. But if you don’t believe his writings, how will you believe my words?

Calvinist Version. But you can't believe his writings, and you can't believe my words.

The same author (God) who wrote the law of Moses through Moses, spoke the words of Jesus through Jesus. If a person doesn't have a heart for one, he can't have a heart for the other. The rabbis honor a Moses they created out of their own imagination and traditions, but they don't honor or believe the Moses of the Bible.

For example, God through Moses commanded the Jewish people to "lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, ... and ... teach them [to] your children, speaking of them when you sit ... and ... walk, [and] when you lie down and ... rise up. And YOU will WRITE THEM ON the door posts of your house" (Deut. 11:18-20), where they can be seen and read daily; so they can be learned and memorized and meditated on and talked about throughout the day.

But instead, the Talmud requires professional scribes, to write specific verses on little scrolls, to put in little boxes (mezuzahs), to nail to the doorposts, where no one can see or read them. Now, it makes sense not to write scriptures on door posts during times of persecution, but then mezuzahs should be avoided also. Scripture wall decals available from online vendors for the living room, kitchen, etc. are more in keeping with the intent of Deuteronomy 11:20 than mezuzahs are.

The rabbis require the scrolls in the mezuzahs to be written on particular types of skins, with particular kinds of ink, with letters of particular shapes, etc. The mezuzahs must be inspected every few years by paid, qualified inspectors, to make sure none of the ink of the letters has faded or chipped, because the mezuzahs are treated as magical amulets that provide protection only if correctly made and maintained.

The amazing thing, is that out of reverence for the physical letters of ink, the rabbis prohibit anyone from actually obeying Deuteronomy 11:20, because weathering etc. could damage writings on a door post. The reverence for the physical images of the words, prevents

the reverence of and obedience to the actual words of God. And religious, ritualistic Gentiles don't do any better, and usually much worse.

Mark 7:6-9. [Jesus] said to them, "Well has Isaiah prophesied of you, ... 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.' ... You reject the commandment of God [like Deut. 11:20], that you may keep your own tradition [like mezuzahs]."

Another example is that God commanded the high priest to bless the congregation by putting "my name on the children of Israel" (Num. 6:27) by saying, "Jehovah bless you, and keep you. Jehovah make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you. Jehovah lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace" (Num. 6:24-26). But the rabbis forbid his name to be spoken, so they forbid the high priest from obeying Numbers 6:24-27.

In John 5:44, Jesus had said, "How can you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that comes from God only?" Now in verse 47, he says, "If you don't believe his [Moses] writings, how will you believe my words?" He didn't say, "You can't believe," but "how will you believe?"

The people Jesus spoke to had already decided many times over whether or not to believe God and his prophets. Why are children, high schoolers, and college age students more open to believe the gospel than older unsaved people? Because most older people have already dealt with the issues several times over, and have already made choices about the gospel. It doesn't mean they can't change their minds, but they're less likely to.

And the religious authorities had already decided many times over they loved receiving honor from men (vs. 44). Jesus was doing to his accusers here, what he did to the nobleman that came asking help for his son. He was trying to help them identify and remove their hindrances to faith.

Jn. 6, Episode 3. The Bread of Life

White (Calvinist):

There is no meaningful nonReformed exegesis of [John 6:37-45] available. As numerous as the attempts of Arminian exegetes to find some way around the testimony of these verses has been, not even a plausible solution has been offered that does not require the complete dismantling of the text, redefinition of words, or the insertion of utterly foreign concepts.¹⁴¹

[White, Potter's Freedom, 153-154.]

I mostly agree with White on this point. If I didn't, I probably wouldn't be writing this book. I haven't yet found another non-Reformed exposition of John 6 that seems adequate to me.

Actually, John 6 doesn't support Calvinism or Reformed theology when you pay attention to the details, because coming and believing aren't synonymous. Jesus message in John 6 isn't, "Go away. There's no hope for you;" but rather "Though you can't come to me directly, you can come by faith. And though you can't persevere to glorification directly, you can by coming to me indirectly by faith." Only this kind of message accomplishes John's joyful purpose in writing his gospel. "These are written so that [by them] you can believe, ... and so that [by] believing, you will have life," Jn. 20:31.

JOHN 6. THE BREAD OF LIFE	
Narratives	Discourses
1) 6:1-15 The Feeding of the 5000	1) 6:25-66 The Bread of Life
Life: Provision for Life	Life: Come by Faith
2) 6:16-21 The Disciples on Sea	2) 6:67-71 Perseverance
Resurrection: Teleportation	Resurrection: Predestination

John 5 recorded the rejection of Jesus' Judean ministry, and John 6 records the rejection of his Galilean ministry. John 5 showed that Jesus, the Son of God, does only and everything the Father does, including giving physical life to whomever he chooses. John 6 shows that Jesus, the Son of Man, provides eternal life to the world by his death as the Passover lamb, and the certainty of resurrection ensures the perseverance of the saints.

The author of the Gospel of John usually included unique material not already covered in the three synoptic gospels, but the account of the feeding of the five thousand is in all four gospels. This account is important for syncing the four chronologies, since it followed the national rejection of the Messiah in all four gospels.

REJECTION OF YESHUA IN THE FOUR GOSPELS			
	Rejection by Rulers	Rejection by People & Results	
Galilee	Blasph. against Spirit Mt. 12:14, 31 Mk. 3:6, 28 Lu. 6:11	Prophet No Honor Mt. 13 Mk. 6a Lu. 4	Feeding 5000 Mt. 14 Mk. 6b Lu. 9
		Feeding the 5000 Jn. 6	
Judea	Jn. 5; 7-10		

Ep. 3, Nar. 1. The Feeding of the 5000

Jn. 6:1-4. After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.

Jesus spent this Passover in Galilee, instead of going up to Jerusalem, because the leaders in Jerusalem sought to kill him because he rejected their rabbinic sabbath regulations and claimed equality with God the Father, as we saw in chapter 5. At the next Passover, one year after this one, Jesus will be executed in Jerusalem.

Jn. 6:5-9. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come to him, he said to Philip, “Where will we buy bread from so that these may eat?” And this he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, “Two hundred pennies worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.” One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, “There is a lad here, which has five barley loaves, and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?”

While sitting on the mountain with his disciples, Jesus looked up and saw “a great company come to him,” Jn. 6:5. The concept of “coming” plays a key role in chapter 6, as it also did in chapter 5 (the nobleman came to Jesus, he wanted Jesus to come to his son because his son couldn’t come to Jesus, but Jesus wouldn’t and instead healed his son from afar through his word, the invalid couldn’t come, but Jesus came to him, and healed him physically but couldn’t heal him spiritually because he wasn’t willing, “Are you willing to be made whole,” Jn. 5:6, the Father healed the world by sending the Word from afar, the dead will all come out of the graves when Jesus calls them), so

I’ve underlined some relevant words related to coming and going in the text. Jesus “himself knew what he would do” (vs. 6), because the Son of God knows all things.

Jn. 6:10-13. And Jesus said, “Make the men sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they wanted. When they were filled, he said to his disciples, “Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.” Therefore, they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten.

Calvinist Version. Jesus took the loaves, and distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to a few of them that were set down; as much as they wanted, but God had made very few of them to want any, so only those few were filled.

Elisha did a similar thing (2 Kings 4:42-44), but whereas he had one loaf per five men, Yeshua had one loaf per thousand men, not including the women and children.

Jesus not only multiplied the bread, but knew exactly how much each person would eat, so there would be exactly twelve baskets left over. (I heard this thought during a discussion at a house church in Lansdale.)

Jn. 6:14-15. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, “This is of a truth that prophet [like Moses, Deut. 18:18] that will come into the world.

This was the high point of Jesus’ ministry in Galilee, but it wasn’t high enough. The men recognized Jesus as Messiah, “that prophet [like Moses, Deut. 18:18] that

would come into the world” (Jn 6:14), but not as the Son of God.

MUST BELIEVE JESUS IS BOTH MESSIAH & SON OF GOD		
	Messiah	Son of God
Requirement Jn. 20:31	Believe that Jesus is the Messiah, ...	the Son of God.
The Galileans Jn. 6:14	This is of a truth that prophet that would come into the world.	
Nathanael Jn. 1:49	... you are the King of Israel.	Rabbi, you are the Son of God,
Samaritans Jn. 4:42	This is indeed the Messiah, ...	the Savior of the world.
Peter Jn. 6:68-69	You are that Messiah, ...	the Son of the living God.

Jn. 6:14-15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

Jesus “perceived that they would come and take him by force” (vs. 15), because the Son of God knows all things. They obviously didn’t believe in a way that by, “believing you may have life through his name” (Jn. 20:31). They were apparently willing to risk their lives, by rebelling against Rome, to anoint him as King and Messiah, but they demonstrated they hadn’t received spiritual life, because they didn’t submit to Jesus’ authority. What kind of king do you make king by force instead of submitting to his rule?

Jesus had seen the “great company come to him” (vs. 5) on the mountain, and now he saw they planned to “come and take him by force to make him a king” (vs. 15), but they hadn’t ever come to him spiritually.

There was one group of men who were eating, not only the physical bread, but also the spiritual bread Jesus provided, by continuing to learn from him, but they were already believers. Jesus had asked Phillip how they could feed the crowd, “this he said to test him” (vs. 6). We know Phillip was already a believer because “Philip found Nathanael, and said to him, ‘We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph’” (Jn. 1:45).

Jesus also allowed Andrew to participate in the solution, “there is a lad here, which has five barley loaves and two small fishes” (vs. 9). We know Andrew was already a believer, because “he first found his own brother Simon [Peter], and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah ... And he brought him to Jesus’” (Jn. 1:41-42). And when the miracle was done, “they gathered ... and filled twelve baskets with the fragments” (vs. 13), one as a personal sign to each apostle.

Ep. 3, Nar. 2. The Disciples on the Sea

Jn. 6:16-21. And when it was evening, his disciples went down to the sea, and entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. So when they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing near to the ship; and they were afraid. But he said to them, It is I [literally, “I am,” “Εγώ εἰμι”]; be not afraid. Then they willingly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land where they went.

The disciples weren’t able to make progress crossing the sea, and “Jesus was not come to them,” Jn. 6:17. But he came to them, and miraculously brought them with him to their appointed destination. “Immediately the ship was at the land whither they went,” Jn. 6:21.

Likewise, Jesus came into the world to save us and bring us with him to our appointed destination of glorification, which we can’t attain ourselves. This additional private miracle and revelation of himself as the “I am” on the sea strengthened the faith of the twelve apostles, excepting Judas, to help them remain with Jesus the next day when most of his disciples abandoned him.

Jn. 6:22-24. The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one into which his disciples had entered, and that Jesus didn’t go with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples went away alone; although there came other boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate bread, after the Lord had given thanks; when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

The people had come to Jesus on the mountain, and after he fed them they intended to come and take him by force to be a king, and now they “came to Capernaum seeking for Jesus” vs. 24. The disciples had gone to Capernaum by supernatural teleportation. The crowd hired shipping.

Ep. 2, Disc. 1. The Bread of Life

Jn. 6:25-26. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” Jesus answered them and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw the miracles, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”

This conversation took place while “Passover ... was [still] nigh” (Jn. 6:4), one year before Jesus will die as the Passover lamb. The crowd had seen “the miracles” (vs. 26), the miracle of the loaves, and the miracle of the boats, but not their meaning or significance. They were more interested in whatever physical blessings he could provide them. The Talmud taught that other things like jewels fell along with the manna in the wilderness, and that Messiah would restore the manna at the time of the Messianic Kingdom.

Talmud, Yoma 75a. “Pounded it in mortars” ... teaches, that along with the manna, there fell for Israel, women’s ornaments that are pounded with mortars. “And cooked it in pots” ... teaches that along with the manna, there fell for Israel, cooking spices.” “And they brought to him more voluntary gifts every morning” (Exodus 36:3) ... teaches that along with the manna, there fell for Israel, precious stones and pearls.

Jn. 6:27. Labor [work, ἐργάζεσθε] not for the food which perishes, but [labor] for that food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of man will give to you; for him has God the Father sealed.

Calvinist Version. Labor not for the food which endures to everlasting life, because the Son of man only gives it to whomever he chooses.

The people had labored very hard to come to Jesus. Yesterday they came up to him on the mountain where there was no food, and

stayed overnight there after the miraculous feeding, and today they had hired shipping and had come seeking him in Capernaum. But they were laboring for “the food which perishes” (vs. 27) instead of “that food which endures” (vs. 27). He himself lived by the principle, “My food is to do the will of him that sent me” (Jn. 4:34).

Mt. 4:3-4. The tempter ... said, “If you are the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” But he answered, ... “It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

Deut. 8:3. He humbled you, and allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna, ... so that he might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

Jesus admonished them to stop laboring, and accept “the gift of God [which] is eternal life” (Rom. 6:23), “that food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of man will give to you” (vs. 27). Jesus is the only one who can purchase that gift for them, “for him has God the Father sealed,” or authenticated, for this mission. But the listeners focused on the part about laboring.

Jn. 6:28-29. Then they said to him, “What shall we do, that we might work [εργαζώμεθα] the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent.”

They asked what “works of God,” plural, they could do to please God. But we know “a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law,” Rom. 3:28. Jesus answered there’s only one ‘work,’ singular, they can do to please God, and it’s not a work, but an abandonment of one’s own works. It’s to “believe on him whom [God] has sent” (Jn. 6:29).

Their question was authentic, though it showed they were focused on justification by works. After Jesus gave his answer, they could have believed, but they chose not to. They didn’t like the answer that they needed justification by faith. All unbelievers dislike justification by faith, because it leaves no place for pride. “If

Abraham were justified by works, he has whereof to boast, but ... Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness,” Rom. 4:2-3. Why do some believe and some don’t? Because it requires humility to accept God’s charity, and most choose not to humble themselves.

They made their decision between verses 29 and 30. From now on, their questions will be manipulative and argumentative. They understood he said they needed to believe on him, and cleverly turned the topic back to getting physical bread.

Jn. 6:30-31. They said therefore to him, “What sign do you show then, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you do? Our fathers ate manna in the desert, as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

The manna started shortly after the first Passover in Egypt, and ended the day after Passover, forty years later. “They ate of the old grain of the land on the day after the Passover, ... and the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten of the old grain of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more,” Josh. 5:11-12.

Since Messiah is a prophet like Moses, it makes sense he will do miracles like Moses. Moses gave several million people, not five thousand, bread; not once, but about 12,500 times; daily, except on sabbaths, for forty years.

Midrash Rabbah, Kohelet, Parashah 1:9. Just as the first redeemer brought down the manna, as it says “Behold! I am going to rain down for you bread from heaven...” (Exodus 16:4) so too the last redeemer will bring down manna, as it says “May there be an abundance of grain in the land.” (Psalm 72:16).

The rabbis taught the manna was given due to the merit of Moses.

Talmud, Taanit 9 a. The well was given to the Jewish people in the merit of Miriam; the pillar of cloud was in the merit of Aaron; and the manna in the merit of Moses.

Jn. 6:32-33. Then Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, Moses didn’t give you that bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world.”

Calvinist Version. My Father gives some people, but not you, the true bread from heaven, which gives life to all kinds of people in the world.

The manna was “bread from heaven” (vs. 32), and “spiritual food” (1 Cor. 10:3), in the sense that its source was from God. “All our fathers ... were all baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual food,” 1 Cor. 10:1-3. “He ... rained down manna on them to eat, and [gave] them of the grain of heaven. Man did eat angels’ food; he sent them food to the full,” Ps. 78:23-25. But it was still physical food. “The people ... ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans,” Num. 11:8. And if “left ... until the morning, ... it bred worms, and stank,” Ex. 16:20.

In contrast to the manna, Jesus is the “true bread from heaven, ... the bread of God” (vs. 32-33). John uses the word ‘true’ several times in a manner similar to its use in Greek philosophy. For example, he talks about “the true light,” Jn. 1:9; “the true bread,” Jn. 6:32; “the true vine,” Jn. 15:1. This may be similar to Plato and Philo’s concept that physical things are copies of spiritual realities.

Dodd:

I do not suggest that the evangelist had direct acquaintance with the Platonic doctrine of Ideas; but there is ample evidence that in thoughtful religious circles at the time, ... that doctrine had entered into the texture of thought. ... His φως αληθινόν [true light] is the archetypal light, αὐτό το' φως, of which every visible light in this world is a μίμημα or symbol; his ἄρτος αληθινός [true bread] the reality which lies within and behind every visible and tangible loaf; . and his ἄμπελος αληθινός [true vine] is that which makes a vine a vine, at once its inner essence, and the transcendental real existence which abides while all concrete vines grow and decay.¹⁴²

[Dodd, Fourth Gospel, 140.]

But if there are some similarities between John's gospel and Greek philosophy, there are more differences. Biblically, matter is not evil, because God created Adam as both a spiritual and physical being, and because "the Word became flesh," Jn. 1:14, and will henceforth always remain flesh, albeit immortal and glorified (brightly shining). "A spirit doesn't have flesh and bones, as you see I have," Luke 24:39. Matter is not unimportant, because God resurrected Messiah's body and will resurrect ours. Your body isn't replaced at resurrection, it's resurrected. Spirits don't get resurrected, because they continue to function in heaven or hell after death.

In John's writings, the realm above is one of God, spirit, truth, light, glory, life, love, and eternity. We don't need more Greek philosophy to understand John than what John provides. So, the bread from heaven is he who provides this spiritual, eternal life from God to the world. And that eternal life in turn gives knowledge of God and truth ("the life was the light of men" Jn. 1:4), and lasts forever; in contrast to physical life maintained by the manna.

At this point the people must have begun to notice some potentially unusual phrases. Psalm 78:24-25 says God gave "them of the food of heaven, ... angels' food." It doesn't say "the bread of God" (vs. 33). And Jesus said the bread of God is "he which comes down from heaven" (vs. 33), though bread is also masculine in Greek and Hebrew, so it's still ambiguous. And he said, "gives life to the world" (vs. 33), not just to the Jewish nation.

In the natural realm, bread doesn't give life to dead people, but only sustains the life of living people. But in regards to the bread from heaven, it does both, because "the world" (vs. 33) needs to receive spiritual life, which it doesn't have, before it can receive the sustenance of it.

Though the bodies of men who are physically dead do nothing, the spirits of men who are spiritually dead, do many things, even after they die physically. "In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham afar off, ... and he cried, ... 'Father Abraham, have

mercy on me,” Lu. 16:23-24. “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still,” Rev. 22:11. One thing spiritually dead men do, is to continue to eat only the doctrines of this world, though God has made provision so they can miraculously take a bite of the bread from heaven by faith, and forever after be sustained.

Jn. 6:34. Then they said to him, “Lord, always give us this bread.”

They said “always give us this bread,” (vs. 34) because the kind of bread they ate yesterday on the mountain, has to be eaten repeatedly to assuage hunger and sustain physical life.

Jn. 6:35. And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He that comes to me will never hunger, and he that believes on me will never thirst.”

Calvinist Version. He that believes on me will never thirst, but you can’t.

“I am the bread of life,” vs. 35. Now there’s no more ambiguity about what he meant when he said “the bread of God is ‘he’ which comes down from heaven” (vs. 33). They focused on the physical bread instead of the bread of life himself standing there speaking to them.

Amazingly, Roman Catholicism repeats their error, not by focusing on physical bread instead of Jesus, but by believing the physical communion bread literally becomes Jesus. Though its appearance doesn’t change, the bread supposedly stops being bread, and is replaced by Jesus, when the priest says the magic words ...

FOR THIS IS MY BODY. [Then] the priest kneels/genuflects to adore Our Lord. He then stands and elevates Our Lord for the faithful to venerate and adore, each saying silently to themselves with faith, piety and love - My Lord and my God! [to a piece of bread!] The priest places Our Lord on the corporal and kneels/genuflects, again, to adore Him.”¹⁴³

[Lee, Roman Missal, Kindle 338-342.]

“CANON I. If any one shall deny, that, in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist, are verily, really, and substantially contained the body and blood,

together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ; but shall say that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or virtue; let him be anathema [damned forever].” 144

[Buckley, Council of Trent, Kindle 1536-1539.]

The entering procession at the beginning of the Catholic Church Mass includes a cross bearer and torch bearers, like on the night Jesus was arrested (Jn. 18:3; Mt. 27:32). The Mass has an altar, like God ordained for the Jewish temple, and like Gentile pagans sacrifice on. Each Mass is supposed to be a true sacrifice of the actual body of Jesus, though bloodless, except for the cup of Jesus’ actual blood that is also offered.

Inasmuch as, in this divine sacrifice which is performed in the mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in a bloodless manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy synod teaches, that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory [pays for sins].” 145

[Buckley, Council of Trent, Kindle 2569-2571.]

Then the priest asks that the angels bear the body and blood to the altar in heaven (as per Jn. 20:17; Heb. 8:5; 9:23), “Most humbly we beseech Thee, Almighty God, command these offerings to be borne by the hands of Thy holy Angels to Thine altar on high, in the sight of Thy divine Majesty.” 146

[Lee, Roman Missal, Kindle 370-372.]

“It is in the liturgy, especially in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, that ‘the work of our redemption is accomplished.’” 147

[U.S. Catholic Church, Catechism, 301.]

If that’s not idolatry and paganism clothed in Christian terms, what is? A solemn and sobering truth to motivate Roman Catholics to seek alternative beliefs: “Idolaters ... will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death,” Rev. 21:8.

To come to Jesus, not to bread, means to come to him for spiritual life, and everyone who does so, receives, and never lacks or hungers again for spiritual life. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst

after righteousness [justification], for they will be filled,” Mt. 5:6. They distributed the bread “and likewise of the fishes as much as they willed [ηθελον]. When they were filled ...,” vss. 1112. “You seek me ... because you ate of the loaves and were filled,” vs. 26. They were still asking for bread, because they hadn’t eaten of this bread that fills forever.

They had never believed. “He that comes to me will never hunger; and he that believes on me will never thirst.” The parallelism doesn’t mean coming and believing are synonymous, but that both are necessary and chronologically simultaneous. They can’t be synonymous, because he will later say coming is impossible apart from a miracle, “no man can come to me” (vs. 44); but he never says, “no man can believe,” he only says “you ... don’t believe” (vs. 36).

Jesus will address their unbelief first in verse 36, and then their failure to come in verses 37-38.

Jn. 6:36. But I said to you, that you also have seen me, and don't believe.

Calvinist Version. But I said to you, that you also have seen me, and can't believe.

Jesus had already said they don't believe when they first arrived and he had greeted them with, "You seek me, not because you saw [the meaning of] the miracles" (vs. 26).

Since they didn't believe after seeing the miracle the first time, what good would it do to repeat it? Jesus didn't say their problem was a lack of predestination, but a lack of faith. "You also have seen me, and don't believe," not "can't believe." He pointed out their problem so they could correct it by believing.

Jn. 6:37-38 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out [perseverance to glorification]. For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.

Calvinist Version. All that the Father gives me will believe on me.

Even though coming and believing are either both true or both false, Jesus is careful to say, all the Father gives will "come;" and not to say all the Father gives will "believe," as Calvinists do.

The Father has given people to Jesus through predestination from the foundation of the world, but the present tense, in "gives me," probably indicates he's talking about a present action. In other words, it's impossible to come to Jesus without a miracle from the Father, like it's impossible to be born again without a miracle from the Father, and the Father gives these miracles to all that believe. "To them he gave authority to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born [not, 'which believed'], not of ... the will of man, but of God," Jn. 1:12-13.

Calvinists tell us Jesus was preaching Calvinism to the crowds, "You can't believe on me. It's hopeless. Go away. You don't get to choose, the Father does." But Jesus didn't say they couldn't believe.

Some Calvinists think Jesus spoke these words to encourage himself.

Sproul:

If we could understand the import of this single verse of Scripture [vs. 37], all of the theological battles of the ages over election, divine sovereignty, and human responsibility would vanish.¹⁴⁸

[Sproul, John, Kindle 1558-1561.]

Pink:

Ah! mark how the Son of God, here the lowly Servant of Jehovah, encourages Himself. He immediately adds, " All that the Father giveth me will come to me." ¹⁴⁹

[Pink, The Gospel of John, Kindle 5659-5663.]

Carson:

All that the Father gives me will come to me. Jesus' confidence in the success of his mission is frankly predestinarian.¹⁵⁰

[Carson, The Gospel according to John, Kindle 5859-5860.]

Kruse:

Lest it be thought he was surprised or disappointed by this response, Jesus added, All that the Father gives me will come to me.¹⁵¹

[Kruse, John, 171.]

But if Jesus were saying this to encourage himself, why not just think it? Or if he were saying it to encourage us when our gospel harvest seems small, why not save it for the dialogue with the apostles at the end of this chapter? He wasn't saying it to scandalize and drive away the crowds, because they didn't even notice he said it; they were scandalized by the later parts about his coming down from heaven, and their need to eat his flesh.

If only the ones the Father picks will believe, why tell the unbelieving crowds about that at all? He could have just told them to believe, and the ones the Father caused to believe, would believe.

Ryle (Calvinist):

Let me entreat every reader of this paper to approach this doctrine of Election from the right end Let him begin ... with simple repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and so work his way toward Election. Let him not waste his time by beginning with inquiries about his own Election It is an old and quaint saying, but a very true one: "A man must first go to the little Grammar-school of Repentance and Faith, before he enters the great University of Election and Predestination." 152

[Ryle, Complete Works, Kindle 85169-85176.]

Was Jesus breaking that old, quaint saying and bringing these unbelievers to the so-called "great University of Election" before they had ever been to the grammar school of faith?

Westminster Confession. 3. VIII (Calvinist):

The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men, attending the will of God revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election.

Was Jesus handling "the doctrine of this high mystery of predestination" with less prudence and care than the men who wrote the Westminster Confession by talking about it to men who weren't able to think they're believers by the evidence of their own good works?

Jesus said "all the Father gives me will come to me" (vs. 37) to help the crowds overcome the obstacles to their faith. The Jerusalem rabbis had difficulty accepting his claim to be the Son of God, so he dealt with their difficulties in Jerusalem in chapter 5. The Galilean crowds had difficulty looking beyond the excitement and miracles, so he dealt with their difficulties in Capernaum in chapter 6. Of course, if faith were predestined, as Calvinism teaches, there's no need to help people with their obstacles to faith.

Jesus didn't explicitly say all who believe (requirement of faith) will come (receipt of coming), but that's the implication. By telling the crowd these things, he implied they could somehow do something about their situation. He didn't explicitly tell the unbelieving crowd,

what we now know, that the link between believing and predestination is that believing puts us into Messiah, and God has intimately foreknown from eternity past every person in the eternal Son and predestined them to come join his Son in his glory at the resurrection. But he did tell them you can't come like you're trying to come, but God provides you one and only one way: you can believe, and if you believe, you will have eternal life.

No one can give himself new birth; "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man" (Jn. 1:13). But God gives new birth "to them that believe on his name" (Jn. 1:12). Regeneration is a gift of God, and a righteous God can't give any spiritual gift to anyone until they've been justified by faith. But once the legal obstacles are removed God is free to pour every spiritual blessing upon us. "The love of God has been poured out abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us, for ... Messiah died for the ungodly," Rm. 5:5-6.

No one can come to the light, because men's deeds are evil; "every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds would be reproved" (Jn. 3:20). But God provides forgiveness and cleansing so "he that believes on him is not condemned" (Jn. 3:18), and then we come to the light.

No one can come to the bread of life; "no man can come to me" (Jn. 6:44). But God provides union with the Son by faith; "he that eats my flesh ... dwells in me and I in him" (Jn. 6:56), and then God "forevermore give[s] us this bread" (Jn. 6:34). And then he can't help but always follow Jesus, no matter what the difficulties. "Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom will we go? You have the words of eternal life'" (Jn. 6:68).

No one knows or receives him (Jn. 1:10-11); but some receive him by faith (Jn. 1:12). No one can be born of God (Jn. 1:13); but some are born of God by faith (Jn. 1:12). No one has or can ascend up to heaven (Jn. 3:13), but some do ascend up to heaven by faith in the one from heaven who was lifted up on the cross (Jn. 3:14). No one

can understand spiritual things (Jn. 3:6, 12); but some have become spiritual by faith (Jn. 3:14-15). No one can come to the light (Jn. 3:20); but some come to the light by faith (Jn. 1:29; 3:18, 21). No one receives his testimony (Jn. 3:32); but some receive his testimony by faith (Jn. 3:33, 36). And no one can come to Jesus (Jn. 6:44); but some come to Jesus by faith (Jn. 6:35-40, 47).

Although Jesus didn't say, "All that the Father gives to me" (vs. 37) to encourage himself, as Calvinism teaches, or to discourage the crowd, God did know in advance his plan of salvation would be a success. If he foresaw it wouldn't succeed, he would have chosen another plan. Which means God not only knows the future, but also alternative scenarios of the future. God had to predestine some things, but not everything, to accomplish his purposes. He made sure anyone who would have believed on Yeshua under any possible scenario, would also be born and hear the gospel so they would believe under the scenario he ultimately chose. It's not as Sproul says, that God can only foreknow what he causes.

Sproul:

Do you think that when God planned His way of salvation that He just threw some medication out there and hoped that some people would take advantage of it and be healed? Or did He know the effect that it was going to have, since He had sovereignly determined that there were people who were going to be healed by the medicine.¹⁵³

[153 Sproul, John, Kindle 1581-1583.]

And since the Father is the giver, Jesus not only receives all who come, but keeps them forever, since he came to do the Father's will. "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost," vs. 12.

Jn. 6:39-40. And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he has given me [requirement of being given] I would lose nothing [receipt of resurrection and glorification], but would raise it up again at the last day [receipt of resurrection and glorification]. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which sees the Son, and believes [requirement of faith] on

him, may have everlasting life [receipt of regeneration], and I will raise him up at the last day [receipt of resurrection and glorification].

Calvinist Version. And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that all which he has given me I will give faith. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which has everlasting life, will see the Son and believe on him.

In verse 39, the Father's giving is past tense, "has given." That might just be advancing the thought that those the Father "gives [present tense]" in verse 37, chronologically also receive eternal security in verse 39 after they've been given. But let's interpret it as referring to those who the Father gave to the Son from eternity past via predestination. We are predestined to perseverance to glorification, not faith. "All which he has given me I [will] lose nothing, but [will] raise it up again at the last day," vs. 39.

The Father's will is described in two parallel chains of causation.

vs. 39: "given" > "lose nothing" (glorification) + "raise up" (glorification)

vs. 40: "believes" > "everlasting life" (justification and regeneration) + "raise up" (glorification)

In the chain initiated by the Father's giving, John is careful not to include "everlasting life," but to skip directly from the Father's giving to the certainty of future glorification. "Immediately the ship was at the land where they went," vs. 21.

Sometimes eternal life is included in the chain of causation begun by the Father, as in "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed" (Acts 13:48); but there eternal life refers to glorification. What is never put in the same chain as predestination is faith. It doesn't say, and can't say, "As many as were ordained to believe, believed."

It would be equally true that all who are ordained to glorification believe, whether 1) union in Messiah through justification by faith

results in God's foreknowledge in Messiah to predestination to glorification, or whether 2) predestination is to faith; but the Bible doesn't teach predestination to faith.

The ones who "see the Son, and believe on him" (vs. 40), are in contrast to the ones that currently, "have seen me and believe not" (vs. 36). In the chain initiated by human faith: "everyone which sees and believes," John includes "everlasting life," meaning justification and regeneration. But the ultimate result is the same, the certainty of future glorification, indicating John is describing the Father's giving and a person's believing as two parts of the same event.

The question is does the Father's giving result in faith, or does the person's faith result in the Father's giving? The Bible never says all the Father gives the Son will believe, and it doesn't directly say all that believe will be given by the Father either. But John's repeated offer of regeneration over and over to all who believe, implies believing will influence the Father's giving rather than the other way around.

If Jesus said "all that the Father gives" (vs. 37) to emphasize man's need to believe, when "you ... don't believe" (vs 36), that would indicate that whoever believes, will be miraculously enabled to come, as the Father's gift to the Son. But if Jesus said "all that the Father gives" (vs. 37) to explain why "you ... don't believe" (vs 36), that would indicate only those the Father gives will believe. But what would be the point of telling unbelievers they can't believe? It makes more sense he was telling unbelievers they need to believe, so the Father will give them to him, because it's impossible for them to come any other way.

Calvinists would say that using faith to solve the mystery of who the Father gives, would just be to replace it with the mystery of who believes. But that question was already answered at the end of chapter 5. People consider things like the testimonies of men, the scriptures, and honor from God versus honor from men; and with the enabling word of the gospel and the Holy Spirit to counteract

the inability and natural tendencies of the flesh, they make a truly free decision.

Also, we know justification by faith results in and from union in Messiah, and there's nothing more logical than for God to predestine to the certainty of glorification all those he intimately foreknew in the beloved Son, that entered into him through justification by faith.

Also, the holy God is not free to give transgressors as gifts to his Son, but only those who have already been justified by faith in the Son's provision, even though chronologically, that justification would still be future to the time he gifted them to his Son by writing their names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world.

Both the Father's giving and the person's believing have the same end and goal, "I will raise him up at the last day" (vss. 39-40). The Father's giving provides eternal security through predestination to glorification; and believing provides justification and everlasting life that provides sanctification and perseverance and lasts forever unto glorification.

Spiritual life alone would be insufficient to undue the damage from sin and Satan. The very bodies we now have must be redeemed. Our bodies are as much a part of us as our spirits are; and we only get one. We won't receive 'new' replacement bodies. Jesus' tomb was empty. Our mortal bodies will be "changed" (1 Cor. 15:51). This is the purpose of predestination and the ultimate purpose of God and salvation. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the [bodily] image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren," Rom. 8:29. Until the completion of our salvation at the return of "the Savior, the Lord Jesus Messiah, who will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself" (Phil. 3:20-2), we can't ever attain perfect completeness. "Not as though I had already attained, either

were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Messiah Jesus,” Phil. 3:12.

Jn. 6:41-42. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.” And they said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he says, ‘I came down from heaven?’”

The thing they focused on in all that Jesus said in verses 35-40, was “I came down from heaven” (vs. 38). They should have focused on their need for Jesus to “raise [them] up at the last day” (vs. 40).

John 2:12-13 seems to indicate Joseph had already died when Jesus moved his family to Capernaum, but Joseph could have visited there sometimes before he died, or they just knew about him through his family. Their question as to how he could be Joseph and Mary’s son, and yet have come down from heaven, was a valid one, if it were asked in the right spirit at an appropriate opportunity.

But instead the people murmured here about the bread of life, like the majority murmured in the wilderness about the manna. “The people spoke against God and against Moses. ... Our soul loathes this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents,” Num. 21:5. “They believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation [ישוע, Yeshua], though he had . given them of the grain of heaven,” Ps. 78:22-24. Before this murmuring, the crowd was called “the people,” in verse 24, but now that their attitude has become antagonistic, they are called “the Jews,” in verses 41 and 52.

Calvinist Interpretations

The underlines are my own in the quotes below. Calvinists keep saying God causes faith, which John 6 never says. To say they overlook an important detail is an understatement. The drawing is to the Son, not to faith.

Carsen (Calvinist):

He cannot “come to” the Lord, he cannot “believe”; only the Father can move him to this step. ... [When God] compels belief, it is not by the savage constraint of a rapist. ... It is by an insight, a teaching, an illumination.¹⁵⁴

[Carsen, Gospel According to John, Kindle 8207-8208.]

Demarest (Calvinist):

Jesus addressed the question of why some did not believe in v. 65, where he said, “no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.” Those who come to Christ in faith do so because the Father has efficiently drawn them [to faith].¹⁵⁵

[Demarest, Salvation, 102, 202.]

Dodd (Calvinist):

Evidence for the claims of Jesus is convincing only to those who have the divine Word dwelling in them (v. 38), . it is only those who are . διδακτοί θεοῦ [taught of God] those whom God 'draws' to Christ and 'gives' to Him, who apprehend what it means that He descended from heaven. Here as in v. 40 to 'come to' Christ is the necessary condition for understanding what He is. . He who 'sees' Christ has eternal life (vi. 40). ... Faith is the gift of God (cf. Ephes. ii. 8-9); no one can come to Christ, ἔα'ν μὴ' ἡ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς [unless it's given him from above]. The teaching is essentially the same as that of the saying in Matt. xi. 25 sq., Luke x. 21 sq.¹⁵⁶

[Dodd, Fourth Gospel, 338, 343.]

Grudem (Calvinist):

This secret, hidden work of God in our spirits does in fact come before we respond to God in saving faith. . “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him” (Jn. 6: 44).¹⁵⁷

[Grudem, Systematic Theology, 702-703.]

Klink (Calvinist):

To come to Jesus is to believe in him. ... Rather than rejecting God, in a real way God had already rejected them. . The statement plainly depicts the inability of a person to “come” (ἐλθεῖν) to Jesus “unless” (ἐὰν μὴ) the Father directly acts in an intervening manner, ... who enacts belief as part of his gift and will. ... What cannot be missed is the necessary connection between the

teaching from the Father and the coming to Jesus. ... Referring back to what he said in vv. 37-39, 44, Jesus declares “no one is able to come to me” (οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρός με), that is, have faith in or believe in him, unless “it has been given to him” (ἢ δεδομένον αὐτῷ). ... In a real way, this is the ultimate rebuke of Jesus to his interlocutors in this challenge dialogue. They lose not only because of their own lack of faith but also because the Father was, quite simply, against them from the start.¹⁵⁸

[Klink, John, Kindle 8995-9397.]

Kostenberger (Calvinist):

People can come to him only if the Father who sent Jesus draws them. Ultimately, therefore, salvation depends not on humans believing, but on the “drawing” action of the Father . by which God moves a person to faith in Christ.¹⁵⁹

[Kostenberger, John's Gospel and Letters, 462.]

MacArthur (Calvinist):

Comes and believes are parallel just as are hunger and thirst. Coming to Christ is believing in Him. ... “All that the Father gives me will come to Me” (v. 37)—a clear statement of God’s sovereignty in the selection of those who will be saved. . God works through exercised faith (though even that faith is a gift). “Draws him” (v. 44)—Scripture clearly indicates that no “free will” exists in man’s fallen, depraved nature; humans are unable to believe apart from God’s empowerment.”¹⁶⁰

[MacArthur, John, Kindle 839, 811-839.]

Michaels (Calvinist):

Those who come to him in faith (that is, “come to the Light”) demonstrate by so doing that they are already “doers of the truth.” . They . prove their works by their faith. . God is at work in a person’s life before that person “receives” Jesus, or “believes,” or “comes to the Light.” . Not that the man was a sinner who “believed” and was consequently reborn. On the contrary, Jesus insists, “Neither this man sinned nor his parents.” . The purpose of the healing was “that the works of God might be revealed in him” (9:3) — that is, God was already at work in his life, and his eventual confession of faith (9: 38) would reveal that to be the case. He did not believe in order to be “born of God.” He believed because he was “born of God.”¹⁶¹

[Ramsey, Gospel of John, Kindle 1321-1334.]

Piper (Calvinist):

“No one can come to me unless it is granted him (=is drawn) by the Father,” is to explain why “there are some of you who do not believe.” ... The point of Jesus in John 6:44 and 6:65 is that Judas’s resistance to grace was not the ultimately decisive factor [but] that it was not “granted him” to come. He was not “drawn” by the Father. The decisive, irresistible gift of grace was not given.¹⁶²

[Piper, Five Points, Kindle 314-311, 649.]

Ryle (Calvinist):

We learn ... man's natural helplessness and inability to repent or believe. Until the Father draws the heart of man by His grace, man will not believe. ... We are spiritually dead. ... These things, no doubt, are deep and mysterious.¹⁶³

[Ryle, Gospel of John, Kindle 1801-1816.]

Sproul (Calvinist):

[Draw means] compel by irresistible superiority.¹⁶⁴

[Sproul, Reformed Theology, 180.]

Steward (Calvinist):

Jesus taught that man is plagued by a twofold inability. First, man cannot come to Him for life. He stated, “No man can come to Me, except the Father which has sent Me draw him” (6:44). . Second, Jesus stated that unregenerate man is unable to believe in Him In His discourse on the Bread of Life, He connected believing on Him with coming to Him (6:64, 65) Jesus stated that unregenerate man is unable to believe in Him. ... To come to Christ is to believe in Christ.¹⁶⁵

[Steward, Doctrines of Grace in John, Kindle 136-147.]

Tholuck (Calvinist):

The condition is the coming to him ... under the presupposition of need; that this coming designates faith, is shown by v. 36, 40, 47. Why did they not believe? Because they were destitute of the inward sense of want, and came to him outwardly indeed, but not inwardly. This inward sense of want is represented as the gift of the Father, (cf. Matt. xix. 11,) is more particularly

described, v. 44, 45, and afterward especially in the prayer, ch. 17, is frequently made prominent. 135

[Tholuck, Gospel of John, Kindle 3976-3977, 3988-3991.]

Non-Calvinist Interpretations

(Non-Calvinist):

The Father ... by an inward teaching and an attraction exercised on human individuals, brings them to the Son Himself. ... The gift of the Father is immediately united with the existence of faith in the one who comes to Christ (comp. Joh 6: 39-40 in their parallelism, and the relation of the latter to the former through the particle ὅτι); the Father draws (Joh 6: 44), and the susceptible soul comes with faith by reason of the drawing influence. . Coming and believing. These two terms are not exactly synonymous. 135

[Godet, John's Gospel, Kindle 4012-4013, 11873-11875, 11983-11984.]

Flowers (Non-Calvinist):

The Messianic secret ... is the temporary strategy Jesus employed to accomplish redemption on Calvary. . Jesus knew that had they believed in Him before the right time then they would not have crucified Him. The reason Jesus's audience in John 6 walked away was . Jesus, while "down from heaven," was judicially blinding Israel by means of riddles (Mark 4: 11), a spirit of stupor (Rom. 11: 8), and provoking language (Jn. 6: 60), while drawing to Himself a remnant of divinely-appointed messengers . to take the gospel to the world so as to draw all to Himself after he was raised up. As Jesus explained, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." 135

[Flowers, Potter's Promise, Kindle 675-683, 1064-1081.]

Forster (Non-Calvinist):

[Jesus was saying,] Go to God and let him teach you my meaning. If you do this then he will give you understanding and draw you to accept me.' This is one of Jesus' continuing themes throughout John 6 and 7, and it shows similarities to the topic we have already covered in Matthew 13. Those who come to Jesus will have the meaning explained to them; those who go to God will hear and learn from him. Those who are disinterested or enemies of Christ and the Father will simply be unable to understand.¹⁶⁹

[Forster, God's Strategy Volume 2, Kindle 4806-4809.]

Hunt (Non-Calvinist):

We have seen that the Bible teaches that in God's foreknowledge He knew who would believe and [they] are those whom the Father has given to the Son ... Calvinists read into Christ's words what isn't there. He actually said: 1. All that the Father giveth me [not all He draws] shall come to me; 2. and him that cometh to me [not everyone the Father draws] I will in no wise cast out. 3. And this is the Father's will...that of all which he giveth me [not all whom He draws] I should lose nothing ... 4. Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him [not all who are drawn], may have everlasting life ... 5. No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him [all who come have been drawn—not all who are drawn come. ... Christ uses "coming to Him" for "believing on Him." Schreiner and Ware write, "The 'coming' of John 6:37 is synonymous with 'believing.' . [This] contradicts Unconditional Election and Irresistible Grace, for which "coming" must be without faith, as though a dead man were being carried. Yes, the Father draws men to Christ—but unless they truly believe in Him, they have not "come" all the way but have drawn back unto perdition. . Those who "draw back" [Heb. 10:38-39] must have been drawn to some extent. Otherwise, to "draw back" would be meaningless. . When Christ says He would draw "all men" to Himself (Jn. 12:32), the Calvinist [Arthur W. Pink, Exposition of the Gospel of John, p. 682] claims,

"The 'all' plainly refers to all of God's elect." Plainly? Only if one is a Calvinist.¹⁷⁰

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 10777-10779, 10808-10818, 10956, 10962-10963, 10870-10871, 10764-10766.]

Jn. 6:43-44. Jesus therefore answered and said to them, “Don’t murmur among yourselves. No man can come [receipt of coming] to me unless the Father which has sent me draw him [requirement of drawing]; and I will raise him up at the last day [resurrection and glorification].

Calvinist Version. No man can believe [receipt of faith] on me unless the Father which has sent me draw him [requirement of drawing].

Jesus didn’t say, “Don’t murmur. You can’t believe. Go away.” He said, “Don’t murmur. You can discuss this all day and it won’t help you come to me now or at the resurrection. You need a miracle to come now, like you’ll need a miracle to be resurrected.”

Remember, these unbelieving crowds did more to come to Jesus than almost anyone we know today. They followed him into the desert where there was no food, they climbed a mountain, they were ready to risk their lives in rebellion against Rome to crown him the Messiah, they spent the night there without conference facilities or tents or sleeping bags not knowing what had happened to him, and after all that they hired boats to seek him in Capernaum. Likewise, we can go to divinity schools, become ordained in some denomination, read all the religious books, and we are still not one step closer to actually coming to him than these crowds were. But the smallest child that believes is ushered directly into eternal union with him, the Father, and all the saints.

We can’t just choose Jesus by deciding to do so. You can’t choose Jesus or true Christianity like you choose a course in college. Christianity 101. There, done! No. There is a “great gulf fixed” (Lu. 16:26), which no man can pass, between the natural and the spiritual, the lost and saved, the unregenerate and regenerate. People have to be miraculously drawn by the Father across that gap.

But even unregenerate men can choose to believe on the Son, and all who believe receive the certainty of eternal life forever through foreknowledge in the Son to predestination to glory. Isn’t this the gospel that John the Evangelist loves: Whosoever will, and only whosoever will! Coming by faith is the only possible way to come.

Then the Father will take care of the miraculous. “It’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,” Mt. 19:24.

Jesus didn’t say “no man can believe on me unless the Father ... draw him,” as Calvinists say; but “no man can come to me unless the Father ... draw him” (vs. 44). An important detail. Men need to come to Jesus to have everlasting life (Jn. 5:40; 6:35), and be resurrected (Jn. 6:37, 44). But the nobleman’s son and the lame man were too sick to come (Jn. 4:47; 5:7), the disciples were stalled on the sea (Jn. 6:18, Mk. 6:48), and the Galilean crowds tried to come without faith (vs. 26).

Jn. 6:45. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they will all be taught of God.’ Every man therefore that has heard, and has learned of the Father [requirement of learning], comes [receipt of coming] to me.

Calvinist Version. Every man therefore that has heard, and has learned [requirement of learning] of the Father, believes [receipt of faith] on me.

Jesus’ quoted Isaiah’s prophecy about how all Israel will be regenerate and be taught of God in the future Messianic Kingdom [Rom. 11:26]. “Your seed will inherit the Gentiles. ... The Holy One of Israel [will be] the God of the whole earth. ... All your [Israel’s] children will be taught of the Lord,” Is. 54:3, 5, 13. The Father will teach the regenerate then, as he does now, through the Holy Spirit. “The anointing which you have received of him abides in you, and you don’t need that any man teach you,” 1 Jn. 2:27.

So Jesus described their dilemma. Only those who are taught of God can come, yet only those who have already come are taught of God. How does one move from being an unregenerate that consistently lacks understanding and faith, to being a regenerate that consistently understands and believes? “He that received seed into the good ground is he that hears the word, and understands it, which also bears fruit,” Mt. 13:23. At the point an unregenerate man believes he simultaneously understands.

The solution to their dilemma is in the next verse.

Jn. 6:46. Not that any man has seen the Father, except he which is of God [the Son], he has seen the Father.

The Son is the only one who has seen the Father and has been taught of God. “As my Father has taught me, I speak,” Jn. 8:28 (also 5:30, 12:49-50, 14:10). He that came down from heaven understands heavenly things and brings us up with him to understand heavenly things when we believe on his having been lifted up on the cross.

Men don’t come to the Son through the Father, but to the Father through the Son. “No man knows ... who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him,” Lu. 10:22. “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me,” Jn. 14:6. And the way we come to the Son is by faith.

Jn. 6:47-48. Truly, truly, I say to you, he that believes [requirement of faith] on me has everlasting life [receipt of regeneration]. I am that bread of life.

Calvinist Version. He that has everlasting life [requirement of regeneration] believes [receipt of faith] on me.

Here Jesus gives the answer to their problem of needing to be regenerate to be taught of God, while also needing to be taught of God to come and be born again. The answer is: “He that believes on me has everlasting life” (vs. 47), because that is something an unbeliever can do to obtain regeneration.

Faith solves the legal problem of sin and condemnation, that needs to be resolved before God can give us the gift of eternal life. Before that legal problem is solved, the Father isn’t righteously free to draw us to Messiah.

Pink (Calvinist):

If it be true that I am powerless to reverse the tendency of my nature, what then can I do? ... If I cannot come to Messiah except the Father ‘draws’ me, then my responsibility is to beg the Father to ‘draw’ me.¹⁷¹

[Pink, Gospel of John, Kindle 5808-5814.]

The unscriptural language of Calvinism, like in this quote from Pink, indicates the unscripturalness of its doctrine. The Bible never indicates men should beg the Father to draw them, and it wouldn’t do any good anyway. Besides, why beg the Father when he offers the gift openly and freely to me, to you, to all of us, now. “Truly, truly, I say to you, he that believes on me has everlasting life. I am that bread of life,” vs. 47-48.

Jn. 6:49-50. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of [requirement of faith] and not die [receipt of regeneration and resurrection].

Calvinist Version:

This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man who will not die [requirement of regeneration and resurrection] may eat of [receipt of faith].

Only a minority of those who left Egypt had spiritual life; but even they died physically, and will be resurrected to life later. Likewise, everyone who saw Yeshua and believed on him, received spiritual life; but even they died (fell asleep) physically, and will be resurrected to life later. So what's the difference in the two groups, and why did Jesus point out that all who ate the manna died physically?

Because the Bible never portrayed the manna as giving anything more than physical life. It never provided spiritual life or knowledge of God to those who ate it, even for a moment. And the whole generation who was under the sentence of physical death because they refused to enter the land (Deut. 1) died during the forty years they ate it; it didn't even extend their natural life.

But Jesus provides spiritual and physical life that lasts forever, even though the body may sleep temporarily. And the minority of people in the Exodus generation that did trust God for spiritual life will eventually be resurrected to life only because God will provide Jesus as the Passover lamb one year after John 6. "Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past [like those of the Exodus generation]," Rom. 3:25.

Jn. 6:51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread [requirement of faith], he will live for ever [receipt of regeneration and resurrection]. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Calvinist Version. If any man live for ever [requirement of regeneration and resurrection], he shall eat of this bread [receipt of faith]. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of all kinds of people in the world.

Jesus has life in himself; so he can give physical life to whomever he chooses. "As the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them, even so the Son quickens whom he will; ... for as the Father has life

in himself, so has he given to the Son to have life in himself,” Jn. 5:21, 28.

Likewise, he’s the living bread that has life in itself, so whoever partakes of it spiritually will also live, spiritually and physically. “I am the living bread ... If any man eat of this bread, he will live for ever,” vs. 51. He gives the living bread by giving himself, specifically his body, not to us, but for us. “The bread that I will give [future tense] is my flesh, which I will give [future tense] for the life of the world” (vs. 51) when he dies as the true Passover sacrifice one year later. His listeners wouldn’t understand this clearly at this time, but he clearly started proclaiming his death and resurrection after Peter’s confession of faith in John 6:69, which took place in Caesarea Philippi, according to Mt. 16:13-22, Mk. 8:27-33, and Lu. 9:18-22.

Jn. 6:69. Simon Peter answered him, ... we believe and are sure that you are that Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Mt. 16:13-22. When Jesus came into the borders of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ... “Whom do you say that I am?” And Simon Peter answered and

said, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God. ... From that time forth Jesus began to show to his disciples, how that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, “Be it far from you, Lord: this shall not be to you [because he had never heard him teach this clearly before].

And Jesus began announcing this publicly.

Mk. 8:27-33. Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi, and by the way he asked his disciples, ... Whom do you say that I am? And Peter answered and said to him, “You are the Messiah.” ... And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spoke that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

In hindsight, we know “my flesh which I will give,” vs. 51, refers to his death. “This is my body, which is broken for you,” 1 Cor. 11:24. Not that he gives his body during the Lord’s Supper (as the Catholic Church erroneously teaches), but that the Jewish Passover observance and Lord’s Supper observance both picture his giving his body in death.

Also, he gives his flesh for the life of “the world,” i.e. all people. When he gave the bread to the crowds on the mountain, he gave it to all to eat “as much as they willed (θέλω)” (vs. 11). He didn’t divide the crowd into two groups and only feed one group. Not that everyone in the world will eat the spiritual bread, but he provides it for “whoever will [θέλω]” (Rev. 22:17).

Jn. 6:52-53. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Then Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat [requirement of faith] the flesh of the Son of man, and drink [requirement of faith] his blood, you have no life in you [no receipt of regeneration and resurrection].”

Calvinist Version. Unless you have life in you [requirement of regeneration and resurrection], you won’t eat [receipt of faith] the flesh of the Son of man and drink [receipt of faith] his blood.

You can only eat his flesh as the Son of man, not as the Son of God. In verse 41 the Jews had “murmured” regarding Jesus’ coming down from heaven. Here, they became even more animated, and “strove among themselves” (vs. 52) regarding eating his flesh.

Jesus taught these things “while the Passover ... was near” (vs. 4), when the Jews annually eat the flesh of the Passover lamb. The blood, separated from the flesh by breaking the flesh in death, delivered the Israelites from death in Egypt. “The Lord will pass through to slay the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood on the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not allow the destroyer to come in into your houses to slay you,” Ex. 12:23.

Jesus' death, that would occur the following Passover, provides forgiveness of sins and justification which delivers from spiritual and physical death. "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world!" Jn. 1:29. "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls," Lev. 17:11. "He that believes on him is not condemned," Jn. 3:18.

Is. 53:6-12. All we like sheep have gone astray, ... and the Lord has laid on him [Messiah] the iniquity of us all. ... He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, ... yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, ... when [he made] his soul an offering for sin. ... My righteous servant [will] justify many, for he will bear their iniquities. . He has poured out his soul to death, . and he bare the sin of many.

Jn. 6:54-55. Whoever eats [requirement of faith] my flesh and drinks [requirement of faith] my blood, has eternal life [receipt of regeneration]; and I will raise him up at the last day [resurrection and glorification]. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

Calvinist Version. Whoever has eternal life [requirement of regeneration], eats [receipt of faith] my flesh and drinks [receipt of faith] my blood.

Eating Messiah's flesh and drinking his blood are symbolic. Together they represent believing on him. One eats and drinks by believing.

We know eating and believing are synonymous, because both their chains of causation include eternal life. "Every one which sees the Son and believes on him [has] everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day," vs. 40. "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day," vs. 54.

Whereas we know coming and believing aren't synonymous, because the chains of causation on the predestination side in this chapter don't include eternal life, but go straight to the certainty of resurrection. "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and ... of

all which he has given me I [will] lose nothing, but [will] raise it up again at the last day,” vs. 39.

John did mention “coming” and “life” together in chapter 5, but not in a chain of causation. “You will not come to me so that you may have life ... How can you believe, which ... seek not the honor that comes from God only? ... Had you believed Moses, you would have believed me, ... but if you don’t believe his writings, how will you believe my words?” Jn. 5:40-47. Per chapter 5, there are challenges to faith, like needing to forsake the praise of men, but believing is always possible.

Jn. 6:56-57. He that eats [requirement of faith] my flesh, and drinks [requirement of faith] my blood, dwells in me and I in him [receipt of union in Messiah]. As the living Father has sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eats [requirement of faith] me, even he will live [receipt of regeneration] by me.

Calvinist Version. He that dwells in me and I in him [requirement of union in Messiah] eats [receipt of faith] my flesh, and drinks [receipt of faith] my blood. As I live by the Father, so he that lives [requirement of regeneration] by me, even he will eat [receipt of faith] me.

We assimilate what we eat and it becomes part of our flesh and blood. The one who partakes in Jesus death by faith “dwells in me and I in him” (vs. 56). We enter into union with him at our Spirit (not water) baptism at justification, when, “by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, ... and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13). The point in his experience that we enter into union with him is at the point of his death. “As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Messiah were baptized into his death,” Rom. 6:3. The point in our experience when we enter into union with him is when we believe, being “justified by faith ... through our Lord Jesus Messiah” (Rom. 5:1).

This resolves the question as to whether believing results in coming, or coming results in believing. John has been very careful to avoid saying that God directly or indirectly causes anyone to believe. Faith is not part of the chain of predestination. But does

believing influence the Father to draw us to come? By believing, we enter into union with

Messiah. The Father, from eternity past, intimately knows the Son. “I live by the Father,” vs. 57. Therefore, the Father, from eternity past, also intimately knows everyone who ever enters into union with the Son. “As ... I live by the Father, so he that eats me, even he will live by me,” vs. 57.

The Father doesn’t have to wait until a person believes and enters into union with the Son in that person’s experience to know him. And it’s unthinkable that someone who is part of and so precious to the Father and Son would not be protected through his foreknowledge, providence, and predestination to ensure nothing will prevent their hearing the gospel, or keep them from attaining a share in eternal glory with the Son. So, before the foundation of the world, the Father gave all those he knew would be joined to the Son to him by writing their names in “the Lamb’s Book of Life” (Rev. 21:27).

Jn. 6:58-60. This is that bread which came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eats [requirement of faith] of this bread will live for ever [receipt of regeneration]. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

Calvinist Version. He that lives for ever [receipt of regeneration] will eat [receipt of faith] of this bread.

These verses summarize and close this part of the dialogue. They repeat verses 49-50, “Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.”

At this point we learn Jesus had said these things while he taught in the synagogue. The crowds that had followed Jesus to Capernaum after the miracle of the loaves, and those who had been in general attendance in the synagogue that day, had been scandalized. “How is it ... he says, ‘I came down from heaven?’ ... How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Jn. vss. 42, 52. Now the dialogue moves outside the synagogue, and continues with the many disciples that had been following Jesus up to this time.

Ep. 3, Nar. 2. The Perseverance of the Saints

Jn. 6:60-63. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, “This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?” When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said to them, “Does this offend you? What if you will see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickens, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life.”

Jesus knew his disciples murmured, not because he overheard them, but being the Son, he knew their thoughts and words, “in himself” (vs. 61). The word for “offend,” in verse 61, is “skandalidzei [σκανδαλίζει],” like our word “scandalize.” Jesus knew he was scandalizing the majority of his disciples, but he didn’t try to hold onto them by avoiding teaching that would offend them.

“What if you will see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?” vs. 62. Talk about teleportation! Like when Jesus teleported the disciples on the sea along with him to the desired destination. And the desired destination Jesus will take us to is our future glorification. “Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him ... For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, ... and with the trump of God, and the dead in Messiah will rise first, then we which are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so will we ever be with the Lord,” 1 Thess. 4:14-17. “We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed,” 1 Cor. 15:51-52. If his disciples had trouble believing Jesus came down from heaven, would it help them believe if they saw him ascend? No, because seeing something physically can’t provide spiritual understanding. The Exodus generation saw Egypt’s army drowned in the sea, and was provided with manna for forty years yet the majority didn’t believe. “Though [Jesus] had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him,” Jn. 12:37. “If they won’t hear Moses

and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead,” Lu. 16:31. And they weren’t persuaded when Yeshua rose from the dead.

Their real problem was that “it’s the spirit that quickens, the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life,” vs. 63. Those disciples didn’t have spiritual life. You have to be “taught of God” (vs. 45) to understand spiritual things. Those who are spiritual accept Jesus’ words, while the world is scandalized. “They are of the world. Therefore they speak of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He that knows God hears us. He that is not of God doesn’t hear us,” 1 Jn. 4:5-6.

Jn. 6:64a. But there are some of you that don’t believe.

Calvinist Version. But there are some of you that can’t believe.

Jesus had just said some of his disciples didn’t have spiritual life or spiritual understanding. We know from chapter 3, the only way to have spiritual life and spiritual understanding is to be born again. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit You must be born again,” Jn. 3:6-7. We also know from chapter 3, the only way to be born again is by faith. “How will you believe if I tell you of heavenly things? ... As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life,” Jn. 3:12-15.

So now Jesus says, “There are some of you that don’t believe” (vs. 64). He pointed out their need to believe, in order to be born of the Spirit, in order to be able to accept his teaching. He doesn’t say, “There are some of you that can’t believe,” as Calvin says.

Jn. 6:64b-65. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that didn’t believe, and who would betray him. And he said, “Therefore I said to you, that no man can come to me, unless it was given to him of my Father.”

Calvinist Version. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that couldn't believe. And he said, "No man can believe on me, unless it was given to him of my Father.

"From the beginning" (vs. 64b) probably means from the time each one began following him. Jesus always knew whether each person in his presence was a believer or not. He knew "who they were that didn't believe ['were not believing,' present tense in Greek]" because they can still become believers after this, and probably some did. But "from the beginning" (vs. 64b) probably also means, Jesus knew from the beginning of time, who and when each person would believe, and who would never believe; just like he knew from the beginning of time, that Judas is the one who would betray him.

Judas had come to Jesus and remained with him physically, but had never come spiritually by being born again by faith. He probably agreed with many things Jesus taught, but he was missing the essence of his teaching. He behaved enough like the other apostles that even the night he betrayed Jesus, the other disciples still didn't suspect he wasn't with them at heart. "Jesus said to him, 'What you do, do quickly.' ... Some of them thought, because Judas had the [money] bag, that Jesus had said to him, 'Buy those things that we have need of for the feast;' or, that he would give something to the poor," Jn. 13:27-29.

Likewise, the world today is full of religious denominations and organizations that have very few members that have ever come to Jesus spiritually. You can't just join a denomination, or choose Christianity as your religion to come to Jesus. You need the miracle of a new birth.

"Therefore I said to you, that no man can come to me, unless it was given to him of my Father," vs. 65. Jesus hadn't said it in exactly that way before, because this verse talks about the authorization the Father gives to men to come to the Son. But the result is the same as when he said, "all that the Father gives me will come to me" (vs. 37). "A man can receive nothing, unless it's given to him from

heaven,” Jn. 3:27. “To them he gave authority [authorization] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of ... the will of man [as in physical birth], but of God,” Jn. 1:12-13.

The Father only gives the authorization to come spiritually to Jesus to “them that believe” (Jn. 1:12). So when men tried to be his disciples without believing (vs. 64), he admonished them they would not succeed that way (vs. 65). The Calvinist interpretation is that Jesus was explaining why some men don’t believe. But Jesus wasn’t talking about people in the marketplace that showed no interest in him. He was talking to those who tried to follow him without faith.

If Calvinism were true, what would be the purpose of telling unbelievers they don’t believe because the Father hasn’t given them authority to believe, so there’s no hope for them? But Jesus didn’t say “no man can believe,” but rather “no man can come” (vs. 65) unless the Father gives him the power. If predestination was to faith, this would have been a good time for Jesus to say “no man can believe on me, unless it was given to him of my Father,” but he didn’t. Why is John always so careful to restrict the Father’s works that come from predestination to “coming,” and never to “believing,” unless the Father never directly or indirectly causes anyone to believe?

Jn. 6:66. From that time, many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him [didn’t persevere to resurrection and glorification].

In this chapter about coming to Jesus, here are more people going away from him. “They went out from us but they were not [ever] of us,” 1 Jn, 2:19. Apparently, these disciples had chosen to leave their occupations and follow him like the twelve, but after this teaching, they were scandalized and went back to their homes and occupations.

Yesterday the crowds had been ready to “come and take him by force to make him a king” (vs. 15), and one day later they left.

Likewise, one year later “much people that were come to the feast, ... took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord’” (Jn. 12:12-13). But a few days later, “it was the preparation of the Passover, ... and [Pilate] said to the Jews, ‘Behold your King!’ But they cried out, ‘Away with him, away with him, crucify him. ... We have no king but Caesar.’” (Jn. 19:14-15).

Perhaps some of Jesus’ disciples that had followed him without saving faith were attracted to his appearance of authority, like that of John the Baptist. “Why do you baptize then, if you aren’t that Messiah,” Jn. 1:25. Perhaps some felt their lives were meaningless, and were attracted to his zeal. “When he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple,” Jn. 2:15. Perhaps some were religious, but had only recognized, like Nicodemus, that “no man can do these miracles ... unless God is with him,” Jn. 3:2.

Perhaps some liked having a prophet from their own region. “The Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast,” Jn. 4:45. Perhaps some liked the excitement. “A great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles,” Jn. 6:2. In any case, like the crowds in general, the majority of his disciples had come for the wrong reasons. “You seek me, not because you saw the [meaning of the] miracles,” Jn. 6:26.

And today, the majority of so-called “Christians” in the world, including the priests, bishops, pastors, deacons, directors, and administrators, don’t know Messiah. “Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? and ... done many wonderful works?’ And then will I profess to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me,’” Mt. 7:22-23. Such people follow a made-up Messiah, rather than the one described in the Bible; like the Jewish people follow a made-up Moses.

But people that have been born again have no choice but to continue to follow him. After the Galilean crowds and the wider

circle of his disciples left, Jesus turned to the inner circle of his twelve apostles.

Jn. 6:67-69. Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Will you also go away?” Then Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom will we go? You have the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that you are that [promised] Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

The same words that had scandalized the crowds, and resulted in their leaving, were recognized by Peter and the apostles as “the words of eternal life” (vs. 68). Some of what he had said was even difficult for those who had been born again spiritually to understand. But even if they wanted to leave, “to whom shall we go?” (vs. 68). God’s children lay his difficult sayings up in their hearts, and await more understanding. “Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart,” Luke 2:19.

Until Peter’s confession at the end of chapter 6, chapters 5 and 6 had been devoid of positive results and expressions of faith. Not since the Samaritans’ confession in John 4:42, “we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Messiah, the Savior of the world,” have we heard such a strong confession of faith. And not since the nobleman and his family believed in John 4:53 have we seen anyone coming to faith.

But Peter and the apostles (except Judas) cherished God’s words more than physical life. “Your words were found, and I did eat them; and your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by your name,” Jer. 15:16. “My soul thirsts for you, my flesh longs for you in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, ... because your loving kindness is better than life,” Ps. 63:1-3.

Lewis:

God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on.

[138 Lewis, Mere Christianity, 23.]

The night before, the apostles were on the sea in the dark, but Jesus came and brought them with him to their destination. Likewise, he brings all who have ever believed on him to glorification. There was never really any question as to whether or not these twelve would stay with Jesus. It was impossible for them to fail to persevere through difficulties because they had been predestinated to glorification, and because the Holy Spirit, though not yet indwelling (Jn. 14:17), helped them because of their regeneration.

God had chosen them to be glorified - not to believe. Jesus will “lose nothing,” (Jn. 6:39), and “will in no wise cast out” (Jn. 6:37), so there’s no possibility they won’t be “raised up at the last day” (Jn. 6:39, 40, 44, 54) according to “the will of him that sent me” (Jn. 6:38, 39, 40). They have “eternal life” (Jn. 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68), and will “live forever” (Jn. 6:51, 58), because they dwell in union, “in me and I in him” (Jn. 6:56), and “live by me” as “I live by the Father” (Jn. 6:57). They will “never hunger and ... never thirst” (Jn. 6:35) and “not die” (Jn. 6:50), because they eat of “the true bread from heaven” (Jn. 6:32, 41), “the bread of God” (Jn. 6:33), “the living bread” (Jn. 6:51), “the bread of life” (Jn. 6:35, 48), which is actually “my flesh” (Jn. 6:51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56) and “my blood” (Jn. 6:53, 54), “which I will give for the life of the world” (Jn. 6:51); unlike “your fathers ate manna ... and are dead” (Jn. 6:49, 58). The Father will never cease to “draw” (Jn. 6:44) them to Jesus; they will never stop being “taught of God” (Jn. 6:44), “the words of eternal life” (Jn. 6:68).

Also, since Jesus had chosen them to be apostles, it was impossible for their apostolic missions to fail.

Jn. 6:70-71. Jesus answered them, “Haven’t I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon, for he it was who would betray him, being one of the twelve.

One apostle, who was an unbeliever, persevered and stayed with Jesus through this trial that scandalized others, not because he was predestined to glory, but because he was predestined to betray Jesus

at the Passover one year later. It's not that God caused Judas to make the spiritual choices he made. Even that warning from Jesus at that time was an opportunity for him to change his direction. But if that were going to happen, God, in his foreknowledge, would have predestined someone else to betray the Son.

What God would not allow to happen at that time, was for Judas to give up being an apostle because of weakness, or the hard teachings of Jesus, or the influence of the others who left, etc. Judas' was like Pharaoh, who made his own spiritual choices, but God strengthened and hardened him as needed to persist through the sufferings of all ten plagues, so that God could make his power known in the earth.

These verses also show that God does take people's future faith and unbelief into account in predestination. He providentially predestines enough things in the physical realm to accomplish his purposes, like having the man "who would betray him" (vs. 64), born in the right time and circumstances to ensure he would have the opportunity to do so.

This section ends with the perseverance of the apostles and the triumphant proclamation of Peter, "We believe and are sure that you are that Messiah, the Son of the living God" (vs. 68-69). Followed by Jesus word of warning, "Haven't I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (vs. 70).

Judas wasn't chosen either to believe or not believe. Judas was chosen for service, as are all who are chosen, believers or unbelievers. Looking forward from eternity past, God chose a man he knew would be an unbeliever, and who loved money (Jn. 12:6; Mt. 26:15), and had other traits that would fit him to the service of dishonor, that God planned for him as for Pharaoh (Rom. 9:17). God doesn't cause anyone to believe or not to believe, or to do righteousness or evil, but he makes use of the choices of both believers and unbelievers. He both "fit[s] to destruction" (Rom. 9:22), and "prepare[s] to glory" (Rom. 9:23).

Coming and Believing

Calvinism teaches the Father's giving and drawing are somehow responsible for believers' having faith. John 6 doesn't say the Father's giving or drawing causes faith. It's true all who are predestined to glory will believe, and it's also true all who believe are predestined to glory. The two groups have the same members, but God doesn't directly or indirectly predestine or cause the faith of anyone. The members of the two groups are the same because faith results in justification and union in Messiah, and God intimately knows from eternity past everyone in union with the Son, and doesn't have to wait until their justification and union to ensure their future glorification through predestination.

The following tables show John is careful not to teach predestination to faith in John 6. Some verses in other chapters might seem to indicate otherwise, but these charts represent John's method in chapter 6.

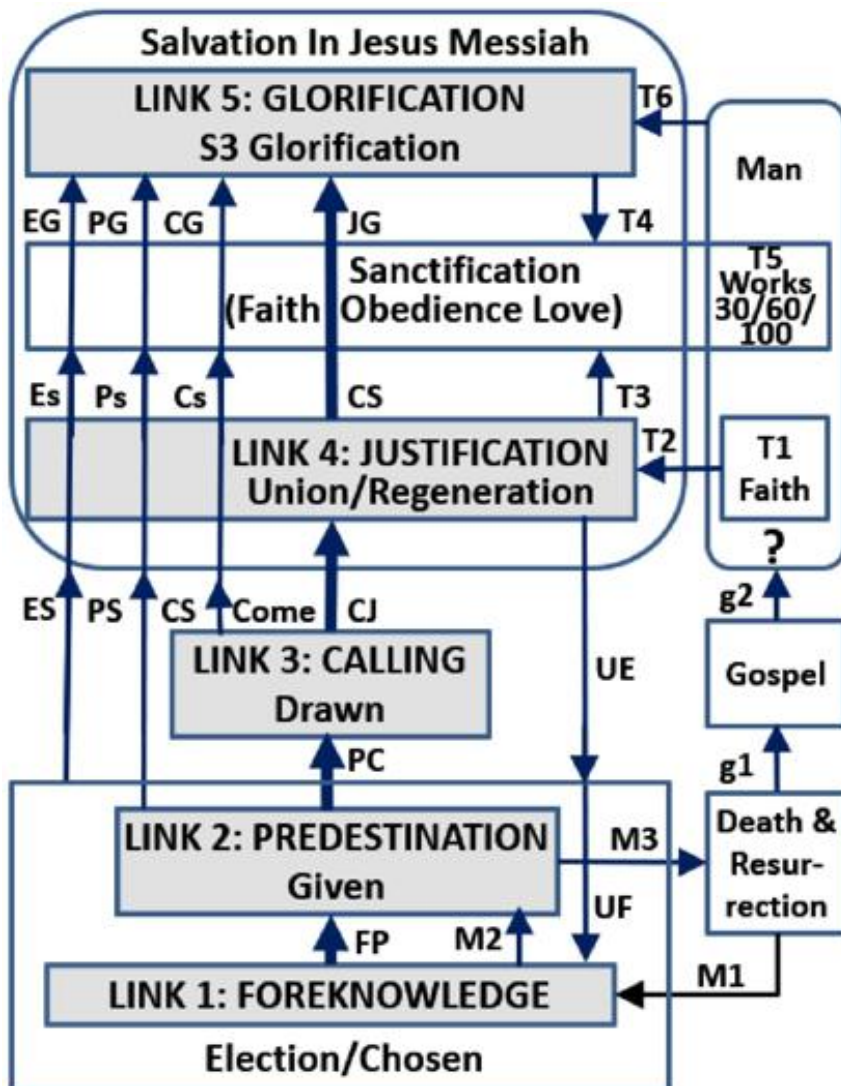
JOHN 6. MEN CAN ALWAYS BELIEVE		
Vs	KJV	Calvinist Version
36	You ... don't believe.	You ... can't believe.
64	You ... don't believe. Who ... didn't believe.	You ... can't believe. Who ... couldn't believe.

JOHN 6. FAITH PRECEDES REGENERATION		
Vs	KJV	Calvinist Version
27 29	Labor ... for ... everlasting life. ...This is the labor, ... that you believe.	Labor ... for ... faith. ... This is the labor, ... that you have everlasting life.
40	Every one which ... believes ... may have everlasting life.	Every one which ... has everlasting life ... may believe.
47	He that believes ... has everlasting life.	He that has everlasting life believes.
49	A man may eat of and not die.	A man who won't die may eat.
50	If any man eat ... he will live for ever.	If any man live forever he will eat.
53	Unless you eat ... you have no life in you.	Unless you have life in you ... you can't eat.
54	Whoever eats ... has eternal life.	Whoever has eternal life, eats.
57	He that eats ... will live.	He that lives ... will eat.
58	He that eats ... will live for ever.	He that lives forever ... will eat.

JOHN 6. COMING IS PREDESTINED; BELIEVING IS NOT		
Vs	KJV	Calvinist Version
37	All that the Father gives me will come.	All that the Father gives me will believe.
44	No man can come ... unless the Father ... draw him.	No man can believe ... unless the Father ... draw him.
45	Every man ... that has ... learned ... comes.	Every man ... that has ... learned ... believes.
65	No man can come ... unless it were given.	No man can believe ... unless it were given.
JOHN 6. PREDESTINATION IS PRIMARILY TO GLORIFICATION		
Vs	KJV	
37	All that the Father gives me will come, ... and him ... I will in no wise cast out.	
39	All which he has given me I would lose nothing, but would raise it up again at the last day.	
44	No man can come to me, except the Father ... draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day.	

In the following diagram of John 6, coming is on the predestination side and believing is on the eternal life side. Both sides lead to glorification, but faith isn't part of the predestination chain. Foreknowledge of union in Messiah is what joins the two chains. Union by justification through faith initiates the predestination chain, the predestination chain doesn't ever cause faith.

Resurrection of Life	
<u>37b</u> Him that comes, I won't cast out. <u>39b</u> All he has given, I'll lose nothing, but raise it up the last day.	<u>44c</u> Man who comes, I'll raise him up at the last day.
<u>37a</u> All the Father gives, will come	<u>44a</u> No man can come, unless the Father draw.
<u>40</u> Every one which believes, will have everlasting life. <u>47</u> He that believes, has everlasting life.	<u>54</u> Whoever has eternal life, I'll raise him up at the last day.
<u>50</u> Man can eat, and not die. <u>51</u> If any man eat, he will live for ever. <u>54</u> Whoever eats, has eternal life. <u>58</u> He that eats, will live for ever. <u>56</u> He that eats, dwells in me and I in him.	
Comes	Everlasting Life & Union →→
Given/Drawn/Taught	Believes/Eats



C=CALLING. E=ELECTION. F=FOREKNOWLEDGE. G=GLORIFICATION. G=GOSPEL. J=JUSTIFICATION. M=MESSIAH. P=PREDESTINATION. T=TIME. S=SALVATION. S=SANCTIFICATION. U=UNION. (M1) 1PET 1:18-20 (M2) (M3) ACTS 2:22 (UF) RM 16:13 EPH 1:4 1 PET 1:2 (FG) (Fs) (FS) 1PET 1:2 (FP) RM 8:29A (EG) 1 PET 1:2-7 (Es) 1 PET 2:9 (ES) 2 TH 2:13 (PG) RM 8:29B JN 6:39 (Ps) EPH 2:10 JN 15:16 (PS) JN 6:37A 17:2-3 (PC) RM 8:30A (CG) 1TH 2:12 JN 6:37B (Cs) 1TH 4:7 (CS) 1COR 1:9:30 JN 6:44A (JG) RM 8:30C TIT 3:7 JN 6:40C (g1) 1COR 15:1-4 (g2) RM 1:16 (T1) EPH 2:8-9 (T2 JUST.) RM 3:28 (T2 UNION) JN 6:56 1JN 1:3 (T2 REGEN.) JN 6:40A (T3) RM 6:3-7:4 (T4) COL 1:4-5 (T5) MT 13:23 (SALVATION) 1COR 1:30

Notice the Golden Chain diagram introduced earlier in the section about Romans 8, also includes Johannine terminology including Chosen for Elected, Given for Predestined, Drawn for Called, and Come for Calling to Jesus.

Jn. 10. The Shepherd and His Sheep

Introduction

Dodd (Calvinist, but Neutral Here):

Consider the Johannine 'allegory' of the Good Shepherd. It is at once obvious that there is not the same dramatic unity of time and place [as in a parable] ... Long before the allegory is at an end, the figure of the shepherd is fused with that of Jesus Himself. It is not any earthly shepherd who came that the sheep might have life in abundance, nor is it any earthly shepherd who has other sheep, not of this fold, whom he must bring together. The shepherd in fact is all through a thin disguise for Jesus Himself, and the details are obviously selected, because they aptly symbolize aspects of His work. ... The pastoral imagery is only a fluctuating series of symbols for various aspects of the work of Christ. For this reason attention can be temporarily diverted from the shepherd who enters by the gate to the gate itself. No shepherd is also a gate (pace those ingenious commentators who suggest that the shepherd sleeps across the opening of the fold, making a gate of his body). But Jesus is both shepherd and gate, the giver of life and the way into life (cf. xiv. 6). 138

[Dodd, Forth Gospel, 134-135.]

Calvinist Interpretations

The underlines are my own in the quotes below. Calvinists keep saying God causes faith, which John 11 doesn't say.

Carson (Calvinist):

The predestinarian note ensures that even their massive unbelief [of those who are not Jesus' sheep] . falls under the umbrella of God's sovereignty.138

[Carson, Gospel according to John, Kindle 5927-5938, 8207-8208.]

Demarest (Calvinist):

A sinner, then, does not become a "sheep" by believing in Jesus; rather, he or she believes in Jesus because antecedently appointed by God as one of the "sheep." ... Those who fail to believe and come to Jesus reject him because they are not his sheep, i.e., because they were not "given" to Jesus by the Father. 138

[Demarest, Salvation, 102, 202.]

Piper (Calvinist):

Being a sheep enables you to believe, not vice versa. . They are able to believe because they are sheep, . those whom the Father has given him. . We believe because we are God's chosen sheep, not vice versa. 138

[Piper, Five Points, Kindle 314-311, 532-536, 649.]

Steward (Calvinist):

Jesus stated that unregenerate man is unable to believe in Him. . He gave the reason for the unbelief of the Jews as not being His sheep

[Steward, Doctrines of Grace in John, Kindle 141-147.]

Jn. 10:1-5. Truly, truly, I say to you, "He that enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out [to pasture - not a picture of becoming a Christian as we'll see]. And when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him, for they don't know the voice of strangers."

Calvinist Version:

Most of the sheep don't hear his voice yet, but someday he will call them by name, and lead them out, and then they will follow him, for they will know his voice. Right now they follow strangers, and flee from the shepherd, because for now the sheep only know the voice of strangers.

Calvinism says all the elect are Jesus' sheep from the time of their predestination before the foundation of the world.

Even while Paul was making "havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women commit[ing] them to prison" (Acts 8:3), and "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, ... that ... whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem," so that Jesus said, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:1-4), Paul, Calvinism says, was Jesus' sheep at that time.

But this doesn't match the description of Jesus' sheep in John 10 that hear only Jesus' voice and follow only him. John 10 doesn't say, "Someday my sheep will hear my voice and follow me." John 10 doesn't say "now they're following strangers' voices, but someday they'll follow the shepherd." It says they don't know strangers' voices or follow them. Wasn't Paul following strangers' voices, and not the Lord's, when he was destroying the church?

Is it true of men who are still "fornicators, ... idolaters, ... adulterers, ... effeminate, ... abusers of themselves with mankind, ... thieves, ... covetous, ... drunkards, ... revilers, ... extortioners, ... [as] such were some of you" (1 Cor. 6:9-11), that "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake ... I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me ... My cup overflows?" Ps. 23:1-5?

Jn. 10:6-9. Jesus spoke this parable to them; but they didn't understand what the things were which he spoke to them. Then Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he will be saved; and will go in and out and find pasture."

Calvinist Version. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers, and the sheep heard them for a long time. I am the door. By me if any sheep enter in, he will be saved.

The false shepherds that came before refers to the leaders of the Jewish nation in Jesus' day, who "are thieves," present tense. In the preceding chapter, John 9, a blind man came to faith in Yeshua; and in stark contrast to the disabled man of chapter 5, who only cared what the rabbis thought of him, this man, as a new and uneducated believer, was willing to dispute the whole council of rabbis, because "one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see," Jn. 9:25. So the rabbis "reviled him" (Jn. 9:28) and "cast him out" (Jn. 9:34) of

the synagogue, which had great implications for his legal rights in the courts and who he was allowed to associate with in society and his family.

When the man's parents were called to the council as witnesses, they avoided giving testimony, "because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man confessed that he was Messiah, he would be put out of the synagogue" (Jn. 9:22). In chapter 12, we learn that "among the chief rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (Jn. 12:42-43). "Woe to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! ... You eat the fat, and you clothe yourselves with the wool; you kill them ... but you don't feed the flock; ... with force and with cruelty you have ruled them," Ezek. 34:2-4.

Verse 3, "The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out" is not a picture of the elect coming to salvation. Verse 9 is the picture of coming to salvation. "I am the door. By me if any man [not sheep] enter in, he will be saved," vs. 9. And once a man (not a sheep) enters, he becomes one of Jesus' sheep and then sometimes is led into the sheepfold for safety, and sometimes is led out for pasture, as he lives the Christian life under the daily care of his loving shepherd. "I am the door. By me if any man enter in, he will be saved, and will go in and out, and find pasture," Jn 10:9. Anyone who hasn't been saved, doesn't follow Messiah in and out, and so is not one of his sheep, even if they will someday become one of his sheep. And anyone who is saved doesn't go in and out of salvation.

God can miraculously change a swine into a sheep. If a person's salvation is genuine, they are transformed from a pig (or unsaved man) into a sheep instead of just being washed up. Otherwise it will "[happen] to them according to the true proverb, ... the sow that was washed [has returned] to her wallowing in the mud" (2 Pet. 2:22).

Jn. 10:10-15. The thief doesn't come, except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I came so that they can have life, and so that they will have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. But he that is a hired man, and not the shepherd, whose sheep are not his own, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees. And the wolf catches them, and scatters the sheep. The hired man flees, because he is a hired man, and doesn't care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knows me, even so I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

The sheep Jesus gives his life for are his disciples and the others in Israel that believe on him. Their sins are already covered through their trust in God, but unless Jesus dies a substitutionary death for them, their sins can't actually be forgiven. "All have sinned, ... being justified ... through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare [God's] righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God," Rom. 3:23-25.

In the natural realm, a shepherd might reason, "It's better for me to lose one lamb, than for the whole flock to lose their shepherd." But that isn't Jesus' [or King David's, 1 Sam. 17:34-37] character.

Jn. 18:9. Of them which you gave me, I have lost none.

Only through his death can Jesus truly protect any of his sheep from false teachers and false doctrine, by thereby providing regeneration and sanctification, "so that they may have life, and so that they may have it more abundantly" (vs. 10). Only by his death can he provide "another Comforter that [will] abide with you for ever" (Jn. 14:16), the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit which "when he ... is come, he will will guide you into all truth" (Jn. 16:13), so you "don't need that any man teach you, but ... the same anointing [of the indwelling Holy Spirit] teaches you of all things," 1 Jn. 2:27.

But he doesn't die only for his disciples and the other believers in Israel.

Jn. 10:16. And I have other sheep which are not of this sheepfold. Them also I must bring, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one sheepfold, and one shepherd.

Calvinist Version. And I have other sheep which are in the not-yet-saved sheepfold. Currently, only my disciples are saved.

When Messiah came to Israel, there were many people who were already saved by trusting in God and his word, like Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna, probably the men who would become apostles, except Judas, etc. God didn't reset all those who already knew him back to being unsaved when Messiah arrived. Those same people without fail also accepted Jesus as Messiah when they heard enough about him. When Messiah arrived, the Father opened the sheepfold door for Messiah, and the already saved sheep followed him in and out to safety and pasture.

That's why Christianity spread so fast during the first century. It spread first among those who already knew God. "There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation. ... Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls," Acts 2:5, 41.

There were also believers outside Israel before Messiah came, which needed to hear the announcement that Messiah had come, and who also accepted the gospel without fail when they heard it. The "high priest that year ... prophesied that Jesus would die, ... [and] gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad," Jn. 11:51-52.

Lydia, in Philippi, was one of those outside the land of Israel who already worshipped God, and that's why she accepted Paul's message as soon as she heard it. "On the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where it was customary for prayer to be made, ... and a certain woman named Lydia, ... which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, so that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul," Acts 16:13-14. The Lord opened her

heart to the gospel of Messiah, like he opened the hearts of the already-saved disciples to understand the scriptures after the resurrection. He “opened . [their] understanding, that . it behooved Messiah to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day,” Luke 24:45-46.

Acts 19:1-5. Paul ... came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples [saved believers], he said to them, “Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?” And they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” And he said to them, “To what then were you baptized?” And they said, “To John's baptism.” Then Paul said, “John ... [told] the people that they should believe on him which would come after him, that is, on Messiah Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Forster:

We must remember the situation in Israel at that time. ... [Some] had received John's baptism of repentance, and in faith-relationship were waiting for God to reveal his coming kingdom. The epitome of this latter attitude is seen in Simeon who was, according to the Bible, righteous and devout, . and the Holy Spirit was upon him (Luke 2:25, NASB). This was truly one who was taught by God and learned from him. . The Father drew him to Jesus and he knew that this was the Messiah. . Lydia . was one who worshiped the true God, and Paul found her at a place of prayer. (Acts 16:13-15). Cornelius [was] a righteous person whose prayers were acceptable to God, and who was therefore led by him to seek and accept Messiah (Acts 10:30-32).

[Forster, God's Strategy Volume 2, Kindle 4793-4803.]

Jesus also died for the unsaved, and even unborn, who were not yet his sheep, (Calvinism says they are already his sheep), like the believers in our generation. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which will believe on me through their word,” Jn. 17:20.

Jn. 10:17-18. Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Though this shepherd gives his life for the sheep, he is resurrected to continue to be their shepherd forever. He isn't merely resurrected, but has power to resurrect himself. "I lay down my life, ... and I have power to take it again," Jn. 10:17-18.

He doesn't merely have life, but has "life in himself" "as the Father has life in himself" (Jn. 5:26). "In him was life," Jn. 1:4. He truly died, but "it was not possible that he would be held by [death]" (Acts 2:24). And he doesn't merely have life in him, but he is life. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," Jn. 14:6.

Jesus was also resurrected because his obedience unto death when God "made him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21), is at the same time his ultimate act of perfect obedience to the Father. "By the obedience of one will many be made righteous," Rom. 5:19. "Therefore will [God] divide him a portion with the great, and he will divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death," Is. 63:12.

Jn. 10:19-23. There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, "He has a devil, and is mad. Why do you hear him?" Others said, "These are not the words of him that has a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication [Hanukkah], and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

Jesus made such blatant claims, that either it's true "he has a devil, and is mad" (vs. 20), or else he's the Son of God he claimed to be. And "these are not the words of him that has a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" (vs. 21), so ...

Lewis:

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of

Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse ... Let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

[Lewis, Mere Christianity, 24.]

Jn. 10:24-26. Then the Jews came round about him, and said to him, “How long do you make us doubt? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you didn’t believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. But you don’t believe because you’re not of my sheep, as I said to you.”

Calvinist Version. I told you, but you can’t believe. ... You can’t believe because you’re not of my sheep.

Jesus said, “You didn’t believe” (vs. 25), and “you don’t believe” (vs. 26), but he never said, “you can’t believe,” as Calvin does.

1 John teaches that only believers have faith, obedience, and love; but faith is unique. No non-Christians obey, and they can’t obey. No non-Christians love, and they can’t love. No non-Christians believe, and they can’t believe as a way of life; but they can believe the gospel, and the moment they do they become Christians and always believe, obey, and love as a way of life. So, John can’t say non-Christians can’t believe, only that they don’t believe.

The sheep always consistently believe. The non-sheep always consistently disbelieve. So if a man disbelieves, we know he’s not a sheep. John 10:26 is an appropriate application of the test of 1 John 5:1, “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Messiah is born of God.” But a non-sheep can believe and become a sheep, and then he’ll always believe.

Here’s the only passage in John’s gospel that says some people can’t believe.

Jn. 12:39-40. They could not believe, because Isaiah said again, “He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; so that they would not see

with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I would heal them.

This passage refers to the temporary judicial blinding of a portion of the nation of Israel, which wouldn't have been necessary if natural men can't believe anyway. There are more things to believe or not believe than salvation by grace through faith. There is also the issue of Jesus' Messiahship to Israel. As per the chapter in this book on Romans 9-11, God has temporarily blinded unsaved Israel from accepting Jesus as the Messiah even after his death, in contrast to the way God made Israel accept prophets like Jeremiah after they rejected Jeremiah's prophecy and caused his death.

Jn. 10:27-28. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life [regeneration, not faith], and they will never perish [resurrection and glorification], nor will any man pluck them out of my hand.

Calvinist Version. My sheep don't yet hear my voice, or follow me, but someday I will give them faith.

Once again, the topic moves on to the certainty of our future resurrection to life and glorification. The shepherd's death and resurrection is the only way the shepherd can ensure abundant spiritual life for the sheep now, and also the only way to ensure their physical resurrection to life later (spirits are never resurrected because only the body sleeps in death).

And since the topic turns to resurrection and glorification, we can expect predestination to be mentioned again, and so it is.

Jn. 10:29. My Father, which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Here in 10:26-29, we see the same parallelism we saw in 6:39-40, showing God's part and man's part in salvation. In both passages, the faith chain is Faith > Eternal Life > Glorification; and the predestination chain is Giving > Glorification. In both passages, the predestination chain skips from giving directly to glorification; and

only the faith chains include the receipt of eternal life.
Predestination is to glory; not to faith.

Jn. 6:39-40

Predestination

This is the Father's will:

[Giving] All which he has given me

[Glory] I ... would raise it up ... at the last day.

Faith

This is the will of him that sent me:

[Faith] Every one which ... believes

[Life] May have everlasting life

[Glory] And I will raise him up at the last day.

Jn. 10:26-29

Faith

[Faith] You [who are not my sheep] believe not

[Life] I give to [my sheep] eternal life

[Glory] [None] will ... pluck them out of my hand.

Predestination

[Giving] My Father ... gave them [to] me

[Glory] [None can] pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Jn. 10:30-42. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, “Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, “For a good work we don’t stone you; but for blasphemy; and because that you, being a man, make yourself God. Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, you are gods?’ If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the scripture can’t be broken; you say of him whom the Father has sanctified, and sent into the world, ‘You blaspheme,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God?’ If I don’t do the works of my Father, don’t believe me. But if I do, though you don’t believe me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him. Therefore they sought again to take him, but he escaped out of their hand, and went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized, and he remained there. And many resorted to him, and said, “John did no miracle, but all things that John spoke of this man were true.” And many believed on him there.

Calvinist Version. If I do not the works of my Father, you can’t believe me. But if I do, you still can’t believe me. You can’t even believe the works; so you can’t ever know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.

He went away again beyond Jordan and many believed on him there, but none of the ones he spoke to earlier.

Why would Jesus tell people “though you don’t believe me, believe the works,” vs. 38 if he had just told them, as Calvinists claim, “only predestined sheep can believe, and that obviously doesn’t include you.” Some of the same people in Jerusalem who didn’t believe in John 10, may be among those who went to him beyond Jordan and “believed on him there,” vs. 42.

When Jesus said he ministered “so that you [who are not my sheep, vs. 26] may know and believe” (vs. 38), only Calvinist-tinted glasses could make that into “but not really.” Thank God for the good news for everyone in John’s gospel! Versus the bad news for most of the world in Calvin’s theological system.

Jn. 11. The Raising of Lazarus from the Dead

Introduction

Calvinists love to use the resurrection of Lazarus as a picture of God sovereignly regenerating a spiritually-dead man without faith, with the assumption that he then believed after and because of his regeneration. But the episode never says Lazarus believed after his resurrection. The episode begins with Lazarus very much alive and a firm believer in Jesus. So you might want to use it as a picture of someone losing their salvation and getting it back instead if you believe in that.

The narrative of the raising of Lazarus from the dead is not compatible with the symbolism of receiving spiritual birth. Though Reformed Theologians have a reputation of being heavily into the Word, they frequently violate the exposition of the Word for the sake of Calvinism, and John 11 is a good example. Add Calvinism's sister doctrines of Covenant Theology and Replacement Theology, and a large part of the Bible becomes beyond hope of their rightly understanding it.

Calvinist Interpretations

(**Calvinist**). At the most fundamental level, regeneration is the divine impartation of eternal spiritual life into the spiritually dead sinner. Scripture employs numerous pictures to illustrate God's effectual call of regeneration. ... Jesus authoritatively summoned Lazarus out of death and into life. ... So also does God command the spiritually lifeless corpse of the sinner to "come out" of his death and by that word effectually brings him to life.¹³⁹

[MacArthur, Biblical Doctrine, Kindle 15254-15260.]

(Calvinist). The dead body of Lazarus was quickened and animated again by the introduction of his soul; but in itself it had not the least active disposition nor inclination thereunto. And no otherwise is it with a soul dead in trespasses and sins.

[Owen, Life and Works, Kindle 25935-2593).]

Pink (Calvinist):

John 11 supplies us with a still more striking example of the drawing power of the Shepherd's voice as He calleth His own sheep. There we read of Lazarus, in the grave; but when Christ calls His sheep by name—"Lazarus, come forth"—the sheep at once responded. ... They "hear" because a sovereign God imparts to them the capacity to hear. ... Each of the sheep "hear" when the irresistible call comes to them, just as Lazarus in the grave heard when Christ called him. . The disciples on the storm-tossed sea (John 6:18), before the Savior came to them, pictures the dangerous position which the sinner occupies— already on the "broad road" which leadeth to destruction. . But in John 11 we have that which is much more solemn and awful. Here we learn that the natural man is spiritually dead, "dead in trespasses and sins." Pink, Gospel of John, Kindle 8686-8689, 9477-9482, 9486-9489). [2] Called.] [If God is powerful enough to give a dead man the ability to hear before he gives him life, don't you think he's powerful enough to give a dead man the ability to make a choice to believe through the power of the gospel?]

Pink (Calvinist):

A corpse in the cemetery is no suitable analogy of the natural man. A corpse in the cemetery is incapable of performing evil! A corpse cannot "despise and reject" Christ (Isaiah 53:3), cannot "resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51), cannot disobey the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:8); but the natural man can and does do these things! [Pink, Studies in the Scriptures 1927, 250-61, cited in Samuel Fisk, Election and Predestination, 155; cited in Hunt, What Love, Kindle 42274229.]

Sproul (Calvinist):

Perhaps a good illustration of monergistic, life-giving power is the raising of Lazarus from the dead. ... The only power Christ used here was the power of his voice. He uttered a command, not a request or an invitation. He made no attempt to woo Lazarus from the tomb. . Monergistic regeneration has to do, not with the whole process of redemption, but strictly with the initial condition or first step of our coming to faith. To be sure, Lazarus acted. He responded. He came forth from the tomb. But the crucial point is that he did none of these things while he was still dead. He did not respond to the call of Christ until after he had been made alive.

[Sproul, Reformed Theology, 213-215.]

Warfield (Calvinist):

We were in point of fact dead in our trespasses and sins and therefore utterly unable to move hand or foot to seek salvation. . Just as Lazarus was called out of the grave by the sheer power of the God who raises the dead, we have been called out of our death in trespasses and sins by the sheer grace of God. . That, as we have said, is the heart of the heart of the gospel. . We may ask, no doubt, why God does not extend his saving grace to all. . These are not wise questions to ask. We might ask why Christ raised Lazarus only of all that lay dead that day in Palestine, or in the world. . No doubt God has his reasons, too, for doing just what he does with his electing grace.

[Warfield, Sermons and Essays, Kindle 11458-11597.]

White (Calvinist):

I = Irresistible Grace: ... God is able to raise the spiritually dead sinner to life. . When God chooses to bring one of His elect to spiritual life, it is an act similar to when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead: just as Lazarus was incapable of resisting the power of Christ in raising him from the dead, so too the dead sinner is incapable of resisting the power of God that raises him to spiritual life. ... There is no more “force” exercised in God’s wondrous act of regeneration than was exhibited when the Lord Jesus cried out, “Lazarus, come forth!” (John 11:43) Life was a gift given to Lazarus, but the giving of the gift did not in any way indicate an ability on the part of the one who received it [to receive it] It would be patently absurd to demand that Jesus first ask Lazarus for “permission” to raise him to spiritual life. . When Christ the Great Shepherd calls His own, they hear His voice . and He raises them up to spiritual life. *[White, Potter's Freedom, 40, 69, 98, 284-285.]*

Non-Calvinist Interpretations

Flowers (Non-Calvinist):

Non-Calvinists can and should affirm with our Calvinistic brethren that all men are born enemies of God. . Where we differ is in relation to the sufficiency of the gospel appeal sent by God Himself to invite all His enemies to be reconciled (2 Cor. 5: 20). Is the “power of God unto Salvation” (Rom. 1: 16) sufficient to enable those who hear it to respond willingly? . Indeed, we are

born dead in rebellion, like the prodigal son in Jesus' parable (Lk. 15: 32). But, we are never said to be "corpse-like" and thus unresponsive as was Lazarus in his tomb, an analogy never linked to soteriology by the Scripture despite what some Calvinists teach in their eisegetical reading of that narrative.

[Flowers, Potter's Promise, Kindle 932-934, 939-941, 2641-2642.]

Hunt (Calvinist):

Continuing the fallacious equating of spiritual death to physical death, Gordon H. Clark writes, "A dead man cannot exercise faith in Jesus Christ." [Gordon H. Clark, *The Biblical Doctrine of Man* (Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1984), 102.] Of course, but neither can a dead man reject Christ, nor can he even sin. . Take a human understanding of "dead," mix it together with the young John Calvin's immature understanding of God's Word, tainted by Augustinian philosophy, stir it all up, and out comes the theory of Total Depravity.

Such humanistic reasoning leads to absurdities like the following from Palmer: ... "When Christ called to Lazarus to come out of the grave, Lazarus had no life in him ... Jesus did resurrect him and then Lazarus could respond. These illustrations reveal the most central issue between the Arminian and the Calvinist. ... The Arminian has the cart before the horse. Man is dead in sins. ... Once he is born again, he can for the first time turn to Jesus, expressing sorrow for his sins and asking Jesus to save him. [Palmer, *Five Points*, 18-19]."

Such reasoning may be emotionally appealing but it is neither biblical nor rational. . [Pink says] I "A corpse in the cemetery is no suitable analogy of the natural man. A corpse in the cemetery is incapable of performing evil! A corpse cannot "despise and reject" Christ (Isaiah 53:3), cannot "resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51), cannot disobey the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:8); but the natural man can and does do these things! [17. Arthur W. Pink, *Studies in the Scriptures* (n. p., 1927), 250-61; cited in Samuel Fisk, *Election and Predestination* (England: Penfold Book and Bible House, 1997), 155]."

[Hunt, What Love, Kindle 4202-4344.]

Rogers:

I disaffirm that the technical meaning of being spiritually dead is adequately illustrated by using Lazarus or dead people in a cemetery, etc., in

order to show that like them, the lost who are dead in sin cannot believe until they have been given life— regenerated. This picture is actually contrary to the panoply of Scripture.

For example, Romans 10:9 says, “If you confess and believe in your heart” which no physically dead graveyard man can do, but a spiritually dead man, by the grace of God, can do. ... If being dead in sin means that the lost cannot respond to God, then [does being] dead to sin mean that the Christian cannot respond to sin? ... The person separated in death from his body is very much aware and responsive, e.g. ... (Matthew 22:32). ...

A far more balanced depiction considers all of the appellations that the Scripture affords the lost such as blind (Matthew 15:14), love darkness (John 3:19), choose to do evil deeds rather than good (John 3:19), strangers, e.g. foreigners (Ephesians 2:19), and gave themselves to sensuality and practice impurity with greediness (Ephesians 4:19). . These dead are pictured as acting, choosing, and practicing certain things. . The lost are perishing, but their lostness and death are not complete (1 Corinthians 1:18) ...

Romans 10:14, “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” . Paul goes on to answer the question quite differently [from a Calvinist]. . The urgent need is not for God to regenerate prior to people exercising faith, but rather for God’s people to send messengers to the lost. . I absolutely reject any suggestion that this great salvific truth and plea is adequately addressed by the Calvinist addendum, “yes, but only if he is one of the elect who is regenerated first so that he can believe.”

[Rogers. Disenchanted Calvinist, Kindle 673-705.]

Jn. 11:1-3. Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore his sisters sent to him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick.”

Calvinist Version. Now a certain man was spiritually dead, named Lazarus. Therefore his sisters sent to Jesus, saying, “Lord, behold, your dear unsaved very close friend whom you love is spiritually dead.

Lazarus was already a believer. The home of his sister Martha wasn't a place of ministry for Jesus, so much as a place of rest. "When the time was come that [Jesus] would be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. ... As they went, ... he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house," Lu. 9:51; 10:38. The New Testament presents Mary, Martha, and Lazarus as a godly, believing family that loved Jesus, a shelter from the storm of life on the road ministering to friends and foes.

"And [Martha] had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word," Lu. 10:39. Mary was the woman who "anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair" (Jn. 11:2). This event is one of the few mentioned in all four gospels. Jesus said, "Wherever this gospel will be preached in the whole world, there will also this, that this woman has done, be told for a memorial of her" (Mt. 26:13).

Jesus greatly loved all three. "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister [Mary], and Lazarus" (Jn. 11:5). Lazarus is called "he whom you [Jesus] love," Jn. 11:3. This sounds similar to when "Peter ... saw the disciple whom Jesus loved ... which also leaned on his breast at supper," referring to John, the author of this gospel. Later in the chapter, "Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, 'Behold how he loved him!'" (vss. 35-36). Lazarus was also a friend of the apostles, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps" (Jn. 11:11).

God has apparently gone out of his way, as it were, to keep any Calvinist from using the resurrection of Lazarus as a picture of giving regeneration to a lost sinner. Nevertheless, the unregenerate, Roman Catholic philosopher, Augustine prefers his own made-up allegory of an unsaved man enslaved to a bad habit over scripture.

Augustine (Calvinist):

That [stone] placed upon the grave, is this stubborn force of habit, whereby the soul is pressed down. ... The ... example of ... Lazarus [is a] grievous kind of death ... distinguished as a habit of wickedness. . But says

some one, How could a sinner be represented by Lazarus, and be so loved by the Lord? Let him listen to Him, when He says, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

[Augustine, Complete Works, Kindle 105286-105287, 105304-105306, 105315, 119234, 119258-119259.]

The Lord didn't become such close friends with Lazarus before he raised him from the dead without Lazarus having been present at the meals with him at Martha's house. "Martha received [Jesus] into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was burdened about much serving, and came to him, and said, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me,'" Lu. 10:38-40.

Lazarus must have eaten with the Lord many times before his restoration to physical life, and he certainly breathed before that. So the raising of Lazarus would be a better picture of a man losing his spiritual salvation and getting it back (which is unbiblical), than of a man coming to salvation.

But Boettner can't allow Lazarus to have ever eaten or breathed until after he was raised from the dead. "Then Jesus ... came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him," Jn. 12:1-2.

Boettner (Calvinist):

In this manner ... every redeemed soul is brought from spiritual death to spiritual life ... Just as the dead Lazarus was first called back into life and then breathed and ate, so the soul dead in sin is first transferred to spiritual life and then exercises faith and repentance and does good works. . In numerous places in Scripture ... men are commended to do things which in their own strength they are utterly unable to do. ... The sick man [was commanded] to arise, take up his bed and walk. The dead Lazarus was commanded to come forth. Men are commanded to believe; yet faith is said to be the " gift of God."

Man's self-imposed inability in the moral sphere does not free him from obligation.

[Boettner, Predestination, Kindle 2331-2333, 2983-2987.]

Jn. 11:4-14. When Jesus heard that, he said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.” Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. . He said to [the apostles], “Our friend Lazarus sleeps.” ... However, Jesus spoke of his death. But they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”

Calvinist Version. Jesus said, “This spiritual sickness is not unto spiritual death, but for the glory of God. Our friend Lazarus is spiritually asleep.” Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is spiritually dead.”

Lazarus’ sickness was not unto death, even though he died from it, because he was a believer and his physical death was temporary. This is the way believers are told to look at the death of the body, (Acts 13:36; 1 Cor. 11:30; 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:14; 5:10). Lazarus is a good picture of a believer’s body sleeping in death, but not a good picture of a spiritually dead person, because spiritually dead people are not said to be merely spiritually sick and then becoming spiritually asleep. If you’re going to use Lazarus as an illustration of something, you should use the whole illustration, not a tiny piece out of context.

This miracle was “for the glory of God, so that the Son of God might be glorified thereby,” because it proved what Jesus had said in John 5:25-29. “The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear will live ... The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves will hear his voice, and will come forth.” The resurrection of Lazarus is the “and now is” (Jn. 5:25) part, that proves the “hour is coming” (Jn. 5:25) part.

Jn. 11:15-17. “And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him.” Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, so that we may

die with him.” Then when Jesus came, he found that [Lazarus] had lain in the grave four days already.

Calvinist Version. I am glad Lazarus is spiritually dead! Let us go to him. Then said Thomas, “Let us also go, so that we may die spiritually with him.”

This miracle is not about unsaved men being saved without faith. There is faith everywhere in this miracle. One of the primary purposes of the miracle was “for your [the apostles] sakes ... to the intent you may believe.” It was to strengthen the faith of the apostles so they could endure the coming week when Jesus would be taken, tried, killed, and buried, and they thought they would probably “die with him” (vs. 16), as Thomas said. It was like the miracle Jesus provided the apostles on the sea of Galilee in chapter 6 to strengthen their faith to persevere when the crowds abandoned him the following day.

The disciples needed to know, like Paul, that even if one’s body is torn to pieces by lions, it would only be like a wound that would heal, because the end of the story is the resurrection of the body. “If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me, if the dead rise not?” 1 Cor. 15:32. The certainty that the same physical body that dies is raised, is what gives courage to the saints to face death.

The miracle of raising Lazarus probably even helped Jesus keep his eyes on the resurrection while he went through his own sufferings and death a few days later. “Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him [on the other side of the cross] endured the cross, ... and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God,” Heb. 12:2.

Dodd, though a Calvinist, had a non-Calvinist interpretation of this chapter.

Dodd (Non-Calvinist Interpretation):

The story of the raising of Lazarus is so conceived as to present a picture of resurrection as it is described in 5:28. ... Lazarus (upon the level of events in

time on which the story moves) will die again when his time comes. If therefore his resurrection is, in some sense, a fulfilment of the prediction in 5:28-9, it must be in a symbolical sense [because Dodd doesn't interpret "and now is" to refer to Lazarus]. ... The resurrection to which v. 28-9 refers is the general resurrection 'on the last day' (cf. vi. 54); but the raising of Lazarus is set in contrast with the resurrection on the last day, to which Martha had pinned her faith. . This assurance [of resurrection] was grounded upon an instance in which resurrection actually took place; Christ overcome death in dying. If therefore the episode of the Raising of Lazarus is to be a true σημεῖον [sign miracle] of resurrection, it must in some way find place for dying of Christ by virtue of which He is revealed as the resurrection and the life. ...

Hence to go to Judaea, while it still means to 'manifest Himself to the world', as in vii. 4, now means also to go to death. Thus the summons to go to Judea, in order that the glory may be manifested in an act of ζωοποιήσις [life-giving] (xi. 4, 10), is also a summons to face death; and so the disciples understand it. . 'Let us go to die with Him'. Thus the narrative before us is not only the story of dead Lazarus raised to life; it is also the story of Jesus going to face death in order to conquer death.¹⁹²

[192 Dodd, Fourth Gospel, 365-368.]

Jn. 11:21-22. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him, but Mary sat still in the house. Then Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

But I know that even now, whatever you will ask of God, God will give it to you.

Calvinist Version. Then Martha said, "Lord, if you had been here, my spiritually sick brother would not have become spiritually dead.

Martha thought Jesus could have saved Lazarus a lot of suffering if he had gotten there before Lazarus died, like the nobleman thought Jesus had to go to his son to heal him. "Sir, come down before my child dies," Jn. 4:49. Jesus is going to show that not only could he save from physical death from afar, but can even save from physical death after physical death. This is an important and very relevant

thing to know, since every believer alive today is going to go through death, if they don't live until the rapture.

Jn. 11:23-24. Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Calvinist Version. Jesus said to her, "Your brother will be saved again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will get his salvation back after he's raised again in the resurrection at the last day."

Martha says she knows her brother "will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Like Jesus said in chapter 6, "of all which [the Father] has given me I ... [will] raise it up again at the last day. ... Every one which ... believes on [the Son], ... I will raise him up at the last day. ... No man can

come to me except the Father ... draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. ... Whoever eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, ... I will raise him up at the last day," Jn. 6:39, 40, 44, 54.

But to Ryle, the topic of resurrection and glorification, which is God's ultimate purpose for the salvation of men, and the goal of predestination, is too mundane a topic; nothing in comparison to Calvinism, anyway.

Ryle:

I It seems most unlikely that these words were meant to be confined to the rising of men's bodies, and were fulfilled by such miracles as that of raising Lazarus from the grave. It appears far more probable that what our Lord had in view was the quickening of souls, the resurrection of conversion. (Ephes. 2:1; Colos. 2:13.) . There is no sinner too far gone in sin for Christ to raise and convert. He that stood by the grave of Lazarus can say to the vilest of men, " Come forth, loose him, and let him go."

[Ryle, Gospel of John, Kindle 1388--3395.]

But this miracle is not about what happens when the Father gives, or a person believes, or the Father draws, or a person eats and drinks. It's about the time after the bodies of those who have

eternal life die, and their bodies are resurrected back to life and physical glorification, which is the ultimate goal and purpose of God in our salvation. There's no such thing in the Bible as a resurrection of spirits, so this miracle is about bodily resurrection, not spiritual life.

Jn. 11:25-27. Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection, and the life. He that believes [requirement of faith] in me, though he were dead [physically], yet will he live [receipt of resurrection]. And whoever lives [physically] and believes [requirement of faith] in me will never die [receipt of regeneration]. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, which would come into the world."

Calvinist Version. Jesus said to her, "I am the regeneration and the spiritual life. He that is regenerated [requirement of regeneration] though he were spiritually dead, yet will he believe [receipt of faith]. And whoever is regenerated and lives [requirement of regeneration] will never stop believing [receipt of faith] in me. Are you regenerated?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. That's why I believe that you are the Messiah.

Jesus is "the resurrection and the life" (vs. 25) to two groups: believers who already died physically, and believers who are still alive physically. "He that believes, ... though he were dead, ... will live," vs. 25. "And whoever lives [physically], and believes, ... will never die [spiritually]," vs. 26.

It's important for us to know that our loved ones that died physically are not lost. Their spirits are still alive, and their bodies will be brought back to life someday. And we believers who are still alive physically, and will face death someday, will remain alive spiritually even through death, and our bodies will be brought back to life someday. Which is why Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps" (vs. 11).

"This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die," Jn. 6:50. "If a man keep my saying, he will never see death," Jn. 8:51.

Godet (Non-Calvinist):

Jesus means therefore: In me the dead [will live], and the living [will] not die [the dead like Lazarus, and the living like Mary and Martha].¹⁹⁴

[194 Godet, John's Gospel, Kindle 15942.]

Martha spoke to Jesus about the event of the resurrection at the last day.

Jn. 11:24. I know that [Lazarus] will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Jesus spoke to her about the person who is the resurrection. The resurrection is not only something to believe in, but someone to believe in.

Jn. 11:25. I am the resurrection and the life.

Believers who are dead and believers who are alive, both believe before their resurrection. If you want to allegorize this narrative, faith precedes regeneration. Or, specific to the narrative, other people, like your parents, have to believe for you before your regeneration. Jesus said to Martha, “Do you believe this? She said to him, Yes, Lord, I believe” (vs. 27), and Lazarus was resurrected.

Jn. 11:28-32. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, “The Master has come, and calls for you.” As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came to him. ... Then when Mary was come to where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.”

Calvinist Version. Mary fell down at his feet, saying, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have become spiritually dead (lost his salvation?).

Jn. 11:33-36. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, “Behold how he loved him!”

The Greek word for “groaned,” (vs. 33) usually means to be angry, but the American editor of Godet’s commentary thinks the word was sometimes used to indicate grief, as in this context. Mary was weeping, the Jews who were with her were weeping, and “Jesus wept.” So the word probably indicates God’s heartfelt sympathy for our pain through the one he sent to share our sorrows and ultimately save us from them.

Jn. 11:37-41a. And some of them said, “Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man would not have died?” Jesus therefore again groaning in himself came to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone laid upon it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of him that was dead, said to him, “Lord, by this time he stinks, for he has been dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I say to you, that if you would believe [requirement of faith], you would see the glory of God [receipt of the resurrection and glorification of the saints]?” Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.

Calvinist Version. And some of them said, “Could not this man which regenerated the blind man, have caused that even this man would not have died spiritually in the first place?” Jesus said, “Take away the really big obstacle to regeneration.” Martha, the sister of him that was spiritually dead, said to him, “Lord, by this time he’s sinning like crazy, for he has been spiritually dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I say to you, that if you would be regenerated [requirement of regeneration], your brother would believe [receipt of faith]?” Then they took away the really big obstacle to regeneration from the place where the spiritually dead was laid.

Jesus waited until Lazarus had been dead four days and his body had begun decaying before restoring him to life so no one could say he hadn’t really been dead, and to show he can resurrect those who have been decayed, or eaten by fish, or dissolved in the ocean, etc.

Mostly, Jesus groaned when he came to the cave because he cared about the sorrow of the people who lost their loved one. But he probably also thought about how he would soon suffer, and be

killed, and be buried in a cave like this for three days before his resurrection. [Jesus would not be spiritually dead for three days.]

The resurrected body will be a "spiritual" body, in the sense that the source of its transformation will be from God. It will not be "flesh and blood" which "cannot inherit the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. 15:50; but it will be "flesh and bones" (Lu. 24:42), not a spirit. After his resurrection, Jesus said, "A spirit doesn't have flesh and bones, as you see I have. ... Have you any food here? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them," Luke 24:42-43. He ate to prove his resurrected body was physical.

The physical resurrection of Lazarus is a bad illustration of giving spiritual life, because resurrection doesn't in itself indicate either salvation or damnation. Both believers and unbelievers are raised. "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves will hear his voice, and will come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation," Jn. 5:28-29.

Does everything have to symbolize spiritual salvation: healing the lame, the blind, raising the dead? Isn't physical death a significant enough tribulation most believers will face? Why are Reformed theologians so against anything physical? To disdain the physical realm is ungodly and unscriptural. The physical realm is half of God's creation and he knew what he was doing in creating it and pronouncing it "good" (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).

If you're going to try to allegorize this miracle to represent spiritual birth, what is the really big obstacle to spiritual birth that the stone symbolizes? Almost everyone would guess something different, but if the miracle is about physical resurrection, the stone represents - a stone. And why would men have to remove the obstacle if it were true God 'sovereignly' regenerates? Augustine said the stone

represents enslaving habits that many unsaved people have. Dream on, Augustine.

Augustine (Calvinist):

[Sinners] pressed down by a malignant habit, are as it were buried, ... as was said of Lazarus, by this time he stinks. That heap [stone] placed upon the grave, is this stubborn force of habit, whereby the soul is pressed down. . For the Lord delivers even from evil habits. . The ... example of ... Lazarus [is a] grievous kind of death ... distinguished as a habit of wickedness.

[Augustine, Complete Works, Kindle 105286-105287, 105304-105306, 105315, 119234, 119258-119259.]

Augustine is correct that in the spiritual realm, unsaved men are often enslaved to bad habits. But in the physical realm, does a stone blocking the door of a dead man's tomb really stop him from doing anything??? Shouldn't that alone have enabled even Augustine to see that physical death is not a good picture of spiritual death?

And as we saw in chapter 5, both the Father and the Son can give physical healing and resurrection to "whom he will" (Jn. 5:21), which is why "the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves will hear his voice and will come forth" (Jn. 5:28-29) to judgment; but neither the Father nor the Son can give freely chosen faith or spiritual life to whomever they wish, as evidenced by the disabled man that was healed, but not saved, in chapter 5.

Jn. 11:41b-42. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, "Father, I thank you that you heard me. And I knew that you always hear me, but because of the people which stand by I said it [requirement of hearing the gospel], so that they may believe [possibility of faith] that you have sent me."

Calvinist Version. And Jesus said, "Father, I thank you for regenerating [requirement of regeneration] Lazarus so that he may believe [receipt of faith]."

The choice of who is predestined is determined by whom the Father gives to Jesus, "all that the Father gives me" (Jn. 5:37), not by whom Jesus prays to the Father for, "Father, I thank you that you heard me." But in regards to physical healing and resurrection, it's

true that “even now, whatever you [Jesus] will ask of God, God will give it to you” (vs. 22).

Is the purpose of God in supposedly sovereignly spiritually regenerating people for the purpose of causing others to start believing instead of themselves? “Because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe.” Rather, in this narrative, the words and works of Jesus give men the opportunity to believe, and many bystanders do because of what they see and hear, not because of predestination.

Jn. 11:43-45. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.” Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Calvinist Version. He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he that was spiritually dead was regenerated but he still had a lot of problems. Jesus said to them, “Help him with his problems.” Then many of the Jews, which were also spiritually dead, but for some reason not in tombs, and had seen Lazarus believe on Jesus, were also regenerated.

Why weren’t the unbelieving Jews who believed on Jesus because they saw Lazarus raised from the dead, also in tombs supposedly needing regeneration like Lazarus? That they believed without needing to be raised from the dead spiritually, would symbolize that most unregenerate men, probably those without bad habits like Augustine described, lol, can believe without being regenerated.

And nowhere does it say that Lazarus believed after he was raised from the dead, the main point Calvinists use this miracle to try to prove. Lazarus was actually a believer before he died, and this miracle is about physical resurrection, not spiritual birth.

Piper (Calvinist):

[1] Jesus called with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out” (Jn. 11:43). And the dead man came out. This kind of call creates what it calls for. If it says,

“Live!” it creates life. If it says, “Repent!” it creates repentance. If it says “Believe!” it creates faith. ... He really did call us—like Lazarus—from death to life ... God has overcome the rebellion of our hearts and drawn us to Christ and created faith ... The call ... overcomes all resistance and produces the faith that justifies.¹⁹⁶

[196 Piper, Five Points, Kindle 354-356, 399-401.][But of course John 11 says nothing about God creating repentance or faith by commanding it.]

Dodd (Non-Calvinist Interpretation):

The story of the raising of Lazarus is so conceived as to present a picture of resurrection as it is described in 5:28. “Those who are in the tombs,” [5:28] “He found Lazarus in the tomb (11:17).” “Will hear his voice,” [5:28] “He cried with a loud voice ‘Lazarus, come out!’ (11:43).” “And come out,” [5:28] “The dead man came out (11:44).”

Dodd provided a much more biblical and in-context interpretation than Piper.

JESUS’ PROPHECY OF LAZARUS’ RESURRECTION IN JOHN 5:25	
John 5:25-27. The hour is coming, <u>AND NOW IS</u> when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so has he given to the Son to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment also.	
John 5:28-29	John 11:17-44
5:28a. The hour is coming in which all that are <u>in the graves</u>	11:17. When Jesus came, he found that he had lain <u>in the grave</u> four days already.
5:28b. will hear his <u>voice</u>	11:43. He cried with a loud <u>voice</u> , “Lazarus, come forth.”
5:29a. and will <u>come forth</u>	11:44. And he that was dead <u>came forth</u> .
5:29b. they that have done good, to the resurr. of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurr. of damnation.	

Jn. 11:46-48. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, “What do we do? For this man does many miracles. If we let him alone thus, all men will believe on him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.

Calvinist Version, Jn. 11:46-48. But some of the other spiritually dead men, who for some reason weren't in tombs, went their ways to the Pharisees. Then the Pharisees gathered and said, “If we let him alone thus, all men will believe on him; because they didn't understand ‘the doctrines of grace,’ that nobody can believe on him.

If Augustine and Calvin had been there, they could have taught the Pharisees that only a small number of men have been preselected to be given faith, so they don't need to worry that “all men will believe on him.”

Spurgeon (Calvinist):

His voice can be heard in the innermost prison of spiritual death. As he called Lazarus, and made him live by his own supreme power, so can he quicken the corrupt sinner. ... We lay wrapped in the grave-clothes of trespasses and sins, and were, like Lazarus, even beginning to stink. He came, and by his mighty Voice he called us forth, and we arose to newness of life. Gracious, indeed, is he who, in the freeness and sovereignty of his grace, is found of them that sought him not, and is made manifest unto them that asked not after him. . When we consider the story of Lazarus, who had been dead, we perceive that every point of his resurrection bristles with spiritual teaching.

[Spurgeon, Complete Works Volume 36, Kindle 24237-24243, 6441364426, 72706-72712).]

Really? Every point bristles with spiritual teaching? Can a Calvinist interpretation handle even the broadest parts of this episode? The episode begins with Lazarus alive and saved; one of Jesus' and the apostles' closest friends. The narrative could possibly be used to picture someone losing their salvation and gaining it back, but not the salvation experience of an unbeliever. The episode also begins with Lazarus sick and almost ready to die. Do men start out saved,

and only if they don't take care of their spiritual health become spiritually dead? Why would Jesus be happy for the disciples sake that he wasn't there to keep Lazarus spiritually alive, and glad that he died spiritually and lost his salvation? Why would Jesus say that Lazarus was not dead, but only asleep, if Lazarus wasn't a believer? Are spiritually dead men actually only spiritually asleep, or are there two classes of unbelievers, those dead and those merely asleep.

Why did both Martha and Mary say if Jesus had been there Lazarus wouldn't have died (spiritually?) in the first place? Why did Jesus say, "I am the resurrection," when there's no resurrection of spirits? Why was Martha's faith required for Lazarus' regeneration? Does the stone really represent bad habits as Augustine says? If God sovereignly regenerates men, why does he need other men to take the stone away? Why did Lazarus have to be regenerated before he believed, but many of the other unbelievers believed just by hearing Jesus' words and seeing his miracle? Why weren't all those other unbelievers in tombs?

It's really better to take the account as John wrote it. Lazarus was a born-again believer that died physically and was restored to life physically. Jesus had promised this event back in John 5:25, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear will live." And physical things, although not as primary as spiritual things, are still very important - enough that the future glorification of our physical bodies to be "like his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21) is the ultimate aim and completion of our complete salvation - justification, sanctification, and glorification. Let's not preach an incomplete gospel. No wonder Christians are so lacking in spiritual maturity these days.

The resurrection and glorification of our physical bodies is the final and crowning event of our salvation. God's ultimate purpose is not merely for us to be justified and regenerated, but "to them who are the called according to his purpose, ... he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:28-29).

“Now are we the sons of God, and ... we know that, when he will appear, we will be like him; for we will see him as he is,” 1 Jn. 3:2. “Father, I will that they also, whom you have given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which you have given me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world,” Jn. 17:24. “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby,” vs. 4. “Jesus said to [Martha], “Didn’t I say to you, that if you would believe, you would see the glory of God?!” vs. 40. By this miracle, Jesus proved the certainty that someday every believer will be resurrected and see the glory of God.

Jn. 11:49-53. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man would die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spoke, not of himself; but being high priest that year, he [though an unbeliever truly] prophesied that Jesus would die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he would gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth, they took counsel together to put him to death.

The chief priests and Pharisees worried that if the people followed Jesus as Messiah, and proclaimed him king, Rome would attack and defeat them. Actually, it was their rejection of Jesus as Messiah that brought God’s judgment of the 70 AD destruction and the 132 AD. dispersion.

Caiaphas thought he was saying that the execution of one man, Jesus, would prevent “the whole nation” (vs. 50) of Israel from being attacked and destroyed. Instead, the Holy Spirit was using him, even though unsaved, to prophesy that Jesus would die for the sins of “the whole nation” (vs. 50) of Israel, so that all who believe would not perish eternally.

There is nothing in the text, but only in the preconceived doctrines Calvinists impose on all scripture, to limit Messiah’s death to the sake of the elect of that nation. As for God using an unbeliever to

prophecy, he did the same with Saul (1 Sam. 10:1-13), and he used Judas to do the same miracles the other apostles did.

In contrast, the “gather[ing] together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad” (vs. 52) does refer to a subset of people in other nations. Messiah died for all, but gathered only some. They were already “the children of God” (vs. 52), because they already trusted in the God of Israel and his word for their salvation, and they accepted the gospel message of Messiah when they eventually heard it. Like Lydia, who already “worshipped God” (Acts 16:14) before Paul evangelized her at a Jewish prayer meeting outside Philippi in northern Greece.

Jn. 15. Sanctification

Jn. 15:10-19. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. ... This is my commandment, that you love one another. ... You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you would go and bring forth fruit [sanctification]. ... Because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Calvinist Version. You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you would believe.

These words of Jesus apply to all believers, not just the eleven apostles (excluding Judas), because he said he chose them “out of the world” (vs. 19), not out from among other believers; and because keeping his commandments, love, and being fruitful are things all believers must do. The Holy Spirit causes all born-again Christians without exception to keep God’s commandments and love the brethren.

Lack of either of these two things proves a person isn’t born again even if he claims to be.

1 Jn. 4:7. Every one that does righteousness is born of him.

1 Jn. 2:29. Every one that loves is born of God,”

1 Jn. 2:4. He that says, ‘I know him,’ and doesn’t keep his commandments is a liar [about knowing him].

1 Jn. 2:9. He that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, [is a liar, and] is in darkness.

Jesus said he chose us out of the world, but he didn’t say here how he made his decision about whom to choose. He had already told us ...

Jn. 6:37. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out.

Jesus chose everyone the Father gave him.

Jn. 6:19. I have chosen you out of the world.

Jn. 17:6. The men which you gave me out of the world.

If that seems like a strange kind of choosing, it's the same kind the Father used when he chose all who are in Messiah through his foreknowledge. He didn't choose us "to be in him," but chose we who were in him through justification by faith.

Eph. 1:4. He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.

The Bible's emphasis is not on whom God chooses, but on what he chooses us to.

Eph. 1:4. He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and without blame before him in love.

Eph. 2:10. We are his workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we would walk in them.

Eph. 2:16. I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you would go and bring forth fruit [i.e. sanctification, not "that you would believe"].

The purpose of salvation is not primarily that men be forgiven and justified, but that they be sanctified and glorified.

Rom. 6:4. We are buried with him by baptism [by the Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:13] into [his] death, so that like Messiah was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also would walk in newness of life.

By entering into salvation, we enter into the purpose of God, chosen to good works, and to our future glorification.

Jn. 17. Union and Glorification

Jn. 17:2-3, 6-9, 11. Father, the hour is come. Glorify your Son, so that your Son also may glorify you. As you have given him power over all flesh, that he would give eternal life [regeneration and glorification] to as many as you have given him. And this is life eternal, that they would know you ... and Jesus Messiah [union]. ... I have manifested your name to the men which you gave me out of the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me. . I have given to

them the words which you gave me, and they have received them, . and they have believed that you sent me. . I pray not for the world, but for them which you have given me, for they are yours. . Keep [glorification] through your own name those whom you have given me, that they may be one, as we are [union].

Calvinist Version. You have given him power over all flesh, that he would give faith to as many as you have given him.

Jesus gives eternal life, not faith, to those the Father gave him. *Through God's provision* of redemption in Messiah, faith in him results in justification and union, which (logically, not chronologically) results in the Father giving them to Jesus from before the foundation of the world through his intimate foreknowledge of them. Eternal life comes from union *with Jesus and the Father*. “*This is life eternal, that they would know you . and Jesus Messiah,*” vs. 3.

God also gives them eternal security, the perseverance of the saints, the certainty of future glorification. “Keep through your own name those whom you have given me,” vs. 11. Union with him also results in the ultimate characteristic of present sanctification: love. “That they may be one, as we are,” vs. 11. “That the love wherewith you have loved me may be in them, and I in them,” vs. 26.

Jn. 17:22-24. The glory which you gave me I have given them[glorification], that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and you in me [union]. ... I will that they also, whom you have given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory [and share in it via glorification], which you have given me; for you loved me before the foundation of the world [and he thereby loved us and chose us in him before the foundation of the world, Eph. 1:4,6].

Calvinist Version. I will that they also, whom you have given me, be given faith.

“The glory which you gave me I have given them,” vs. 22, but we won’t receive it until “they ... whom you have given me, be with me where I am, ... [and] behold my glory” (vs. 24). We won’t only

behold his glory, but will also share in it. “When he will appear, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is,” 1 Jn. 3:2.

Because we’re in union with the Son, we’re predestinated to glorification with the Son. “To them which are in Messiah Jesus, ... [since] Messiah is in you [union], ... [and] since the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he that raised up Messiah from the dead will also [resurrect] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you. ... Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn [from the dead] among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, ... them he also glorified,” Rom. 8:1, 10-11, 29-30. “Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus will raise up us also by Jesus, and will present us with you, ... to the glory of God,” 2 Cor. 4:14-15.

As the Father “loved [the Son] before the foundation of the world” (vs. 24), so also “he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, ... accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:4-6). His ultimate purpose is that even our physical bodies will one day share in the glory which Messiah’s body already has, and all creation will be renewed. “I, John, ... saw ... the Son of man, ... and his countenance was as the sun,” Rev. 1:9-16.



Some Closing Thoughts

If predestination is to glorification, and not to faith, all the immoral aspects of Calvinism are removed.

1) If predestination is to glorification, and not to faith, it means God didn't choose who will believe and leave the rest with no chance of escaping eternal punishment. He isn't worse than a man who would raise dogs to torture them.

2) If predestination is to glorification, and not to faith, it means God doesn't choose not to save people he is fully capable of saving. He isn't less loving than a fireman who risks his life to save everyone, even the undeserving, in a burning building.

3) If predestination is to glorification, and not to faith, it means God doesn't punish people for doing what he indirectly created them through their birth as children of Adam to be unable to avoid doing. He isn't like a child abuser who punishes a young child to death for wetting the bed.

4) If predestination is to glorification, and not to faith, God's love becomes the greatest love of all time, because he did everything he could possibly do, limited only by his holiness, to save men, even to the point of giving himself, through his eternal, sinless Son, to suffer death and shame for the sake of unworthy men he loves so much. And the Lamb becomes, as he truly is, the one worthy of unending praise and thanksgiving throughout eternity, and the sight of the Father becomes the truly beatific vision.

5) If predestination is to glorification, and not to faith, it means God isn't the source of all the cruelty, falsehood, and evil in the world, like Satan's and Hitler's sins. He created angels and men as volitional beings despite the evil it made possible; but he will make all things right in the future by eternal rewards and punishments, and by isolating evil in the lake of fire.

If predestination is to glorification, and not to faith:

6) Total Depravity? Yes, but not that prevents men from believing the gospel.

7) Unconditional Election? No. God chooses all whom he has intimately known in the Son from eternity past to sanctification and glorification, not to faith.

L) Limited Atonement? Irrelevant. God knew from the beginning all who would be in Messiah, and they become united with Messiah through justification by faith, so all men have a genuine offer of salvation, whether God's foreknowledge resulted in limited atonement or not.

I) Irresistible Grace. Only after justification by faith. Faith is not predestined. Ephesians 4:8 is reinterpreted by Calvinists to fit Calvinism.

P) Perseverance of the Saints. Yes! That's the whole purpose of predestination - to ensure the safe arrival of every believer to share in the glory of Messiah! Thanks be to God!

The main problem with Calvinism is not that it's immoral, though it is, but that it's unscriptural, as evidenced by the discrepancies between the language of Calvinism and the language of the Bible. But as Jerry Walls says, Calvinism is also to be condemned for presenting an exact opposite picture of what the Bible says God is like.

Walls (Non-Calvinist):

In a nutshell, our case against Calvinism is that it doesn't do justice to the character of God."

[Walls, Does God Love Everyone, in Flowers, Potter's Promise, Kindle 410-411.]

God can't do everything. He can't do illogical things like create something he can't create, like a rock so big he can't lift it. Even God is subject to logic. Likewise, God can never lie, or be unrighteous or unjust. Justice is not 'whatever God does,' but, like logic, something even God is subject to.

Luther:

God is that Being, for whose will no cause or reason is to be assigned, as a rule or standard by which it acts; ... but it is itself the rule of all things ... Wherefore, what God wills, is not therefore right, because He ought or ever was bound so to will; but on the contrary, what takes place is therefore right, because because He so wills. A cause and reason are assigned for the will of the creature, but not for the will of the Creator; unless you set up, over Him, another Creator.

[Luther, Bondage of the Will, 139.]

Once again, Luther followed the Roman Catholic philosophers that came before him, instead of the Bible. Romans 3 says there's nothing more important in the universe or in time itself than for God to be righteous.

Rom. 3:4. So that you [God] will be justified in your sayings, and will overcome when you are judged.

It's critical God remain just while providing justification. He must be both ...

Rom. 3:26. Just and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus.

Luther:

If [Reason] be pleased with a God who crowns the undeserving, it ought not to be displeased with a God who damns the undeserving. For if He be just in the one instance, how shall He not be just in the other? seeing that, in the one instance, He pours forth grace and mercy upon the undeserving, and in the other, pours forth wrath and severity upon the undeserving?

[Luther, Bondage of the Will, 163.]

Luther, of all people, should have understood it's not unrighteous of God to pour "forth grace and mercy upon the undeserving" because of ...

Rom. 3:24-25. The redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his [God's] righteousness for the remission of sins.

We are made righteous by vicariously partaking in Messiah's death to justify us. But there is no action in Messiah anyone can partake of to vicariously make him worthy of predestined damnation. And if God created all men so that without fail not a single one has any real chance of not being worthy of punishment, without also providing each one a real chance of salvation, then God would be the ultimate cause of their sin, and thus couldn't be just in punishing them for being as he himself created them. But God does provide each a real chance of salvation in contradiction to Calvinism.

Luther:

If you are concerned about this, - that it is difficult to defend the mercy and justice of God, seeing that, He damns the undeserving, that is, those who are for that reason ungodly, because, being born in iniquity, they cannot by any means prevent themselves from being ungodly, and from remaining so, and being damned, but are compelled from the necessity of nature to sin and

perish, as Paul saith, “We all were the children of wrath, even as others,” (Eph. ii. 3.), when at the same time, they were created such by God Himself from a corrupt seed, by means of the sin of Adam, - Here God is to be honoured and revered, as being most merciful towards those, whom He justifies and saves under all their unworthiness: and it is to be in no small degree ascribed unto His wisdom, that He causes us to believe Him to be just, even where He appears to be unjust. For if His righteousness were such, that it was considered to be righteousness according to human judgment, it would be no longer divine, nor would it in any thing differ from human righteousness. But as He is the one and true God, and moreover incomprehensible and inaccessible by human reason, it is right, nay, it is necessary, that His righteousness should be incomprehensible. [It’s only incomprehensible under the false and artificial theological system of Calvinism and Reformed theology.]

[Martin Luther. On the Bondage of the Will (p. 240). Scriptura Press. Kindle Edition.]

If 100% of the men God created, even indirectly through Adam, have no hope to pass God’s test, then either the creator’s creature or his test is flawed. Once Adam and Eve sinned, God could have destroyed them for their own sin, and created another couple to test; or he could have allowed them to live, and bear flawed children, but provide a genuine way of salvation to them and their children, which is what he did.

Luther:

Why did He permit Adam to fall? And why did He make all of us to be infected with the same sin, when He ... might have created us from some other seed, or might first have cleansed that, before He created us from it? - God is that Being, for whose will no cause or reason is to be assigned, as a rule or standard by which it acts.

[Ibid., 138-139.] [Luther’s right that Calvinism is unreasonable.]

It’s not that God doesn’t have to be righteous or reasonable, according to the normal understanding of those words, as Calvinism teaches; but that Calvinism errs when it says men aren’t able to accept the gospel. It would be unrighteous for God to allow Adam and Eve to bear children who can’t believe, and then provide

salvation only to whoever he chose to give faith to. Even unsaved men understand there's no *responsibility*, without *ability*.

God himself says it's unjust for one person to suffer because of another person's sins.

Jer. 31:29-30. In those days they will say no more, 'The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' But every one will die for his own iniquity. Every man that eats the sour grape, his [own] teeth will be set on edge.

Potters are welcome to make clay pots for karate demonstrations if they wish. But if we found a way to give life, awareness, and feelings to clay, God would condemn anyone creating them to show his strength by causing them anguish, as Calvinists interpret Romans 9. Is God really someone who 'glorifies' himself by making vessels of wrath, the way Calvinists interpret this phrase; or is he someone who gave everything - his only Son - in great love to do everything logically and righteously possible to save his enemies?

If a diet of watching violent movies for entertainment harms peoples' minds, imagine the harm done to the tenderness of men's hearts when their doctrine trains them over the years to say about some being elected to glory, even though they know it also means the abandonment of others to hopeless reprobation ...

Spurgeon (Calvinist):

Beloved, there is a sweet ring about this ... We believe through grace,"
[Spurgeon, Works Volume 36, 22817-22832.]

Imagine what the church's outreach to the world would be if the church focused on the God that ...

Jn. 3:16. So loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him would not perish, but have everlasting life.

the way this verse is normally interpreted without Calvinistic training.

The figure in the evangelical revival who affected its effectiveness and direction most profoundly was John Wesley - whose theology was eclectic but was influenced by the Early Church and radical (eg Moravian) influences, and who identified primarily with Arminius, not Calvin or Luther.

[Forster, God's Strategy, 5008-5011.]

Yes, Wesley's sinless perfection doctrines caused great harm by eventually leading to the Higher Life, Pentecostal, and Charismatic movements, but his non-Calvinism made him a leader in evangelism.

Even the degree of Calvinism affects the fervency of missionary outreach.

Spurgeon (Calvinist):

During the pastorate of my venerated predecessor, Dr. Gill [a hyper-Calvinist], this Church, instead of increasing, gradually decreased. But mark this, from the day when Fuller, Carey, Sutcliffe [less Calvinist], and others, met together to send out missionaries to India, the sun began to dawn of a gracious revival.

[Geisler, Chosen, 141-142.]

New Calvinism "is quickly becoming the consensus opinion of mainstream evangelicalism," [Curley, New Calvinism, Part I, 227.] so, it's urgent to redeem evangelicalism from Reformed Theology. We need to stop teaching predestination to faith, which ultimately is justification by predestination; and return to the original heart of the Reformation, which was justification by faith. Not only will this revitalize evangelistic outreach, but will also increase the number of true sola fide conversions, which is the only way to achieve sanctification and glorification.

Instead of teaching predestination to faith, churches should teach predestination to glorification, i.e. eternal security, a message of joyful confidence and encouragement for godly living.

Rom. 5:2. We have had access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God!

1 Jn. 3:2-3. Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself.

Col. 1:4-5. The love which you have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven.

A philosophical and practical question still remains after God's reputation is cleared from Augustinian/Calvinistic slander. If the same number and set of people, will still end up in eternal punishment by their own rejection of God's provision of eternal life, as would also have been selected under Calvinism, then the same number of people still suffer the same horrible fate. God provides salvation for the sake of those who will be saved. For their sake, he can't avoid providing it even though its provision brings additional condemnation to those who reject it. God can't be like a teacher who denies recess to the whole class because some rebellious students misbehaved. Even if the same number are saved and lost under Calvinism or non-Calvinism, at least under non-Calvinism a person himself is truly (not just technically) responsible for his having accepted or rejected God's provision of salvation, and God thereby remains just and loving.

Also, it doesn't seem reasonable that God would let anyone's eternal destiny be dependent on how well believers self-sacrificially bring them the gospel as they ought. Predestination ensures that those who will be in Messiah cannot fail to attain glorification because of some chain of events that otherwise could have resulted in them not hearing the gospel.

Calvin (Calvinist):

How it is that the fall of Adam involves so many nations with their infant children in eternal death without remedy unless that it so seemed meet to God?

... The decree, I admit, is dreadful.

[Calvin, Institutes, Kindle 17772-17774.]

But there is no such decree in scripture. God is infinitely more loving than sinful men, and has provided everything at immeasurable cost to save men, being limited only by the legal obstacles that even God himself can't righteously set aside.



Appendix 1. Messiah's Return and Edom's Destruction

The following is an overview of some of the prophesied events leading up to Messiah's return and the destruction of Edom. How many Bible-believing Christians even know the destruction of Edom is a significant Bible doctrine? There's even a whole book devoted to it, though a short one, the one-chapter book of Obadiah.

I learned most of the following from Arnold Fruchtenbaum, and recommend his book, *The Footsteps of the Messiah*, and his website, ariel.org, for further information.

The 70 AD. Destruction. In Luke 21:20-24, Jesus prophesied believers should flee Jerusalem when they see it surrounded by armies. But how do you flee a city when it's surrounded by armies? In 66 A.D., Roman armies led by Cestius Gallus surrounded Jerusalem, but had to retreat, and his army was almost annihilated. So, the Christians then fled, and sat out the war in Pella, across the Jordan. Emperor Vespasian's son, Titus, returned in 68 A.D., and destroyed the city in 70 A.D. Matthew 24 is similar, but the warning in Matthew 24 is to flee Jerusalem in the middle of the future tribulation period when you see the antichrist set up an idol of himself in the temple.

The First World-Wide Regathering in 1948.

It was prophesied there would be only two world-wide regatherings of Israel (Is. 11:11); the one which happened in 1948 which was a regathering in unbelief before the day of the Lord (Zeph. 2:1-3) in preparation for judgment (Ezek. 22:15-22), and one in faith after the day of the Lord in preparation for blessing. The return from Babylon around 500 A.D. was not a worldwide regathering, but only from Babylon. The second world-wide regathering will be the last, because then the kingdom will be set up (Is. 11:11-12, 15-16).

The Rapture. The rapture, or the catching away (1 Thess. 4:17), refers to when God will take the church to heaven to sit out the tribulation period before returning the church to earth to share in the 1000-year Messianic Kingdom. Not only living church saints (saints means all born-again believers) will be taken, but also those who have died will be physically resurrected and united with their spirits and souls and taken. (1 Thess. 4:14-17). We know the rapture takes place before the tribulation period because all seven feasts God gave Israel in Leviticus 23 have been fulfilled literally on the exact day of the feast so far, and we can expect that pattern to continue. The Four Spring Feasts = Messiah's First Coming: 1) Jesus died on the Feast of Passover, 2) He was shown to be sinless on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, 3) He rose from the dead on Sunday, the day after the Sabbath, the Feast of Firstfruits, and 4) He gave the Holy Spirit to the church on the Feast of Pentecost. The Three Fall Feasts = Messiah's Second Coming: 5) The rapture will occur on the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashana) (1 Cor. 15:52), 6) The tribulation period will begin on Yom Kippur, 7) The Messianic Kingdom will be set up seven years later on the Feast of Tabernacles. If it be argued that "of that day and hour knows no man" (Mt. 24:36), we don't know which year's Rosh Hashana it will be, so we don't know the day.

The Russian Invasion of Israel. A Russian alliance will invade Israel, probably before the beginning of the tribulation period, though the timing is uncertain (Ez. 38:8).

The Return of Elijah. Elijah (2 Kings 2:11) and Enoch (Gen. 5:24) never died. Just as Messiah returned to heaven and is waiting there in his resurrected and glorified body to return, so Elijah is waiting there in his unglorified body to return (Mal. 4:1, 5-6).

The Signs in the Sun and Moon. Joel 2:1-2.

The Day of the Lord. There will be a seven-year period (Dan. 9:24-27; 12:7; Is. 28:14-22; Rev. 11:3; 12:6, 14) of judgment before the Messianic Kingdom is set up called "the day of the LORD"

(Zephaniah 1:14-15), and “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:6-11), and “the tribulation period” (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 7:14). It’s not the rapture that begins the tribulation period but rather Israel’s signing of a 7-year treaty with the antichrist (Dan. 9:27).

The Antichrist. The antichrist (Jn 2:18, Rev. 13:1-14) will control most of the world (Dan. 2:42-44; 7:7-8, Rev. 6:1-8) during the tribulation period. He will be part of the counterfeit trinity of Satan, the father; the Antichrist, the son; and the False Prophet, the unholy spirit. The Antichrist is also called the “little horn” (Dan. 7:8), and “that man of sin (2 Thess. 2:3-10).

The Two Witnesses and the Mark of the Beast. (2 Thess. 2; Rev. 11, Rev. 13 - 14).

The Abomination of Desolation. Daniel said the antichrist will set up an image of himself, the abomination of desolation, in the temple in Jerusalem (Dan. 9:27; 11:31-36; 12:1-12. Rev. 13:15-18). Daniel wasn’t talking about Antiochus Epiphanes putting a statue of Zeus in the temple in 168 BC, because the abomination was still future in Jesus time (Matt. 24:15). And Jesus was not referring to when Hadrian put a statue of Jupiter and himself on the already-destroyed temple mount in 117 AD., because it didn’t “make desolate” (Dan. 11:31), and it didn’t happen in the middle of a seven-year treaty, etc.

The Flight from Jerusalem to Petra. The antichrist won’t control Jordan (Dan. 11:41). Many Jews will flee to the mountains of Edom in southern Jordan (Rev. 12:5-6) when the antichrist sets up his image in the temple. Since Jesus’ prophecy about the 70 AD. destruction of Jerusalem in Luke was fulfilled literally; his prophecy about the future abomination of desolation in Matthew will also be fulfilled literally.

In both Luke and Matthew, “nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom” seems to represent World War I and II rather than ‘normal’ ongoing wars through the ages. Luke had a big gap of time in verse 12 where he went from World War I and II back to 70

AD., and another big gap of time in verse 24, where he went forward from 70 AD. to the tribulation period.

But in Matthew, Jesus went right from World War I and II, to the abomination of desolation. It makes sense Matthew would be concerned about the tribulation period attack on Jerusalem right before the kingdom is set up, since the gospel of Matthew portrays Jesus as King of Kings in the Messianic Kingdom. (Matt. 24:2-15).

The Return of Messiah to Edom. The antichrist will divide the armies of the world to attack both Jerusalem and the Jewish people in Edom. At the moment when things will look most hopeless, the Messiah will return in the air and save the Jewish people in Edom first, and then those in Jerusalem (Zech. 12:7). Messiah will start in Edom and fight his way to Jerusalem while flying on a cherub (white horse), destroying the antichrist's armies with rays from his hands and the words of his mouth. (Hab. 3:313; 2 Thess. 2:8-9; Rev. 19:11-21). The mountains of Edom will be eroded from rivers of blood from the antichrist's armies, and the land of Edom will become perpetual fire and brimstone (Is. 34:2-10).

The Messiah's Path to Jerusalem. Messiah will destroy the world's armies from Edom to the "winepress", which is the Kidron valley between the Temple mount and the Mount of Olives, where the blood will flow up to the horses' bridles (Is. 63:1-6. Rev. 14:20). Then Messiah's feet will touch down on the Mount of Olives, the same place he left earth from (Zech. 14:1-16; Acts 1:9-12).

The Great Valley, the Mountain, and the River. The Great Valley will form when the Mount of Olives splits with part going towards the north and part towards the south, so that the valley it forms will run east and west as an access road up the high mountain to the Jerusalem and the temple (Zech. 14:116).

The Mountain will form when the Samaritan Hills, the Judean Mountains, and the rest of the world's mountains will be lowered, and Jerusalem will be raised to become the highest mountain in the world (Zech. 14:10 Isaiah 2:2. Ez. 20:40. Ez. 40:2).

The River will begin at the porch of the rebuilt temple and will miraculously get deeper and deeper from that small source. Part of it will run down the new valley to the Dead Sea, which will change it into fresh water; and part of it will run west to the Mediterranean Sea (Ez. 47:1-10. Zech. 14:8. Joel 3:17-18).

The Messianic Temple is described in Ezekiel 40-48 in minute details that requires a literal interpretation and is impossible to

allegorize effectively. The land will be divided among the physical tribes of Israel in a way that has never yet been fulfilled. (Ez. 48:1-3).



The First Resurrection. The first resurrection is for the Old Testament saints and believers who died during the Tribulation Period so all believers of all times will enjoy the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 20:4-6). The church saints that had died will already have been resurrected at the rapture (1 Thess. 4:16-17).

The Second World-Wide Regathering. The second world-wide regathering of Israel (Is. 11:11-12) is also the last (Is. 11:15-16).

The Revolt at the End of the Messianic Kingdom. There will be a final revolt at the end of the thousand-year Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 20:7-9), but all who participate in it will have been fully warned by the object lesson of the perpetually-visible desolation of Edom (Is. 34:9-10) and perfect teaching (Is. 2:3; Mic. 4:2; Hab. 2:14).

The Second Resurrection. The second resurrection is for the unbelievers of all times to receive differing amounts of punishments in the Lake of Fire according to their deeds (Rev. 20:10-15). No believers will have died during the tribulation period (Is. 65:20) so there will be no need for a resurrection of believers after the First Resurrection described above. Instead, those believers who had entered the kingdom in unglorified bodies and any of the children born to them who became believers will be glorified before the new heaven and earth.

The New Heaven and Earth. In the eternal state, God the Father will come down to live with men on earth. Men won't go up to heaven to live with God (Rev. 21:1-3). There will still be nations and kings, streets and gates, etc. (Rev. 21:21-27).

Appendix 2. The Angel of the LORD

Man is comprised of three parts, body, soul, and spirit. "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless," 1 Thess. 5:23. And since "God created man in his own image" (Gen. 1:27), it's not surprising God is also comprised of three parts, "the Father, the Word [the Son], and the Holy Spirit" (1 Jn. 5:7).

My body, soul, and spirit all share the same name, Wayne. And the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all share the same name, Jehovah. The part of me that can be seen is called my body, Wayne's body. And the part of Jehovah that can be seen was called his angel, Jehovah's angel.

He's also called the Son, the Word, and was called the Angel of the LORD, because LORD in all caps in the KJV is a placeholder for the

name of God, יהוה transliterated Jehovah, or Yahweh, or however it's pronounced. It's not that he actually was an angel, "he didn't take on himself the nature of angels" (Heb. 2:16), but that he looked like an angel, because angels look like men, since only Cherubim and Seraphim have wings. And he was spirit like an angel. Later, he "was made flesh" (Jn. 1:14), and became a man, and was named Jesus. So he's no longer "the Angel of the LORD," but "the man, Messiah Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

The pre-incarnate Jesus was with men from the beginning of creation. He walked with Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8) and Enoch (Gen. 5:22-24).

Hagar saw the Angel of the LORD.

Hagar. Gen 16:7, 13. The Angel of the LORD found [Hagar] ... And [Hagar] called the name of Jehovah that spoke to her, you are "El Roi [The God I See]," for she said, "Here have I also seen him that sees me."

The targums are rabbinic paraphrases of the original Hebrew into the vernacular Aramaic which the Jewish people spoke after their captivity in Babylon. In them, the rabbis claimed Hagar didn't 'call the name' of the Jehovah that spoke with her anything, but rather 'called on the name' of Jehovah, or in other words, she merely prayed.

Targum Onkelos: And she {prayed in} the Name of the Lord who had spoken with her, {and she said:} "You are Eloha, seeing all."

But Genesis 16:13 says Hagar called the name of Jehovah [שם-יהוה, shem Yehovah] something, just as Abraham called the name of a place [שם-המקום, shem ha-makom] something. It doesn't say Hagar called on the name of Jehovah, because there's no "b," meaning "on" before "name," like there is when Abraham called "on" the name of Jehovah [בשם-יהוה, b'shem Yehovah] in prayer. "There he built an altar to the LORD, and called on the name of the LORD," Gen. 12:8, also 13:4 and 21:33.

The rabbis in the targums were trying to avoid the idea that Hagar saw Jehovah, as the scripture says she did. She didn't see the Father, but she saw the visible part of Jehovah, the Angel of Jehovah, the Son, the Word.

The Angel of the LORD and two angels came to Abraham one afternoon.

Abraham. Gen. 18:1-2. And Jehovah appeared to [Abraham] in the plains of Mamre. ... And, lo, three men stood by him [Abraham]. ... And he ... set [food] before them, ... and they did eat.

The targums say Abraham didn't see God himself but rather his glory. They are partly right since, Yeshua is "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," Jn. 1:14.

Targum Onkelos: And the glory of the Lord was revealed to [Abraham] in the valley of Mamre. ... Three angels in the resemblance of men were standing before him.

The two angels went on to Sodom, but the Angel of the LORD, who is also Jehovah, stayed to announce Isaac's birth and hear Abraham's prayer regarding Lot and Sodom.

Abraham. Gen. 18:2, 22-19:1. Lo, three men [the Angel of Jehovah and two angels] stood by [Abraham]. ... The ... [the two angels] ... went toward Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah. ... And Jehovah went his way, as soon as he had finished talking with Abraham. And two angels came to Sodom at evening.

But the targums have God waiting around while Abraham feeds three angels, one of which leaves after announcing Isaac's birth, and two of which go on to Sodom. And again, they say God didn't talk with Abraham; his glory did.

Targum Onkelos: The [angel] who had made known the tidings to Sarah ascended. ... The majesty of the Lord went up when He had ceased to speak with Abraham. ... Two angels came to Sodom at the evening.

Rambam taught that every time the Bible says anyone, except for Moses, saw angels or God, it was only a vision. "The forms in which angels appear form part of the prophetic vision. Some prophets see angels in the form of man."

[Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed, 98.]

Ramban, on the other hand, rightly points out that's impossible because it would mean all the men of Sodom had the same vision. [Nahman, Ramban on Genesis, 18:1.] "The men of ... Sodom surrounded the house, ... both old and young, all the people from every quarter, and they called to Lot, ... 'Where are the men which came in to you this night?'" Gen. 19:4-5.

Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the LORD, and said he saw God face to face.

Jacob. Gen. 32:24, 30. Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day And [the man] said, "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince you have power with God and with men, and have prevailed." ... And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel [**פניאל**], for I have seen God [**אלהים**, Elohim] face to face, and my life is preserved.

But the rabbis claim he only saw an angel. The *Shenei Luhot HaBerit*, published in 1648, and some other works, even go so far as to say what he saw was Esau's guardian angel, Samael, i.e. Satan, who only temporarily named Jacob "Israel." "We must certainly not imagine that someone like Samael would grant Jacob blanket recognition for the future. Jacob's right to be called "Israel" was conferred upon him only at Bet El in [Gen.] 35:9." The Judaica Press translation blatantly changes the word of God to say Jacob said he saw an angel instead of God face to face.

Judaica Press Bible, Gen. 32: 30. I saw an angel face to face. **Midrash Rabbah, Bereishit Rabbah 77.** He was the ministering [guardian] angel of Esau.

Moses saw the Angel of the LORD, who is also God, in the burning bush. But the rabbis have Zagnugael, Jehovah, and the Word of the

Lord, all using a very busy bush.

The Bush. Ex. 3:2-15. The Angel of LORD [מלאך יהוה] appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. ... And when the LORD [יהוה] saw that he turned aside to see, God [אלוהים] called to him out of the midst of the bush. ... Say, ... 'I Am has sent me to you.'

Targum Onkelos. Zagnugael, the angel of the Lord, appeared to him in a flame of fire in the midst of the bush. ... The Lord called to him from the midst of the bush. ... Targum Jerusalem. And the Word of the Lord said to Mosheh, ... [say] EHEYEH has sent me to you.

The Angel of the LORD was with Israel in the shekinah glory cloud from the birth of the nation at the Exodus, until the destruction of the first temple and the Babylonian captivity. The shekinah glory is a high, narrow, pillar of cloud, with a fiery light inside, that makes the cloud look bright during the day, and whose fire shines through clearly at night. Jehovah was in the cloud. "The LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night," Ex. 13:21.

The rabbis didn't want to say Jehovah was in the cloud, so they said the shekinah glory was in the cloud.

The Shekinah Glory Cloud. Ex. 13:21. Jehovah *[יהוה] went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud.*

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. The glory of the Shekinah of the Lord *went before them by day in the column of the Cloud.*

Jehovah was in the cloud in the person of the Angel of the LORD. This is shown by the parallelism of Exodus 14:19a and 14:19b. But the Angel of the LORD is not synonymous with the cloud. Exodus 14:19a says the Angel of the LORD moved first in this case, and then in 14:19b the cloud caught up.

The Angel of the LORD. Ex. 14:19. The Angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud

went from before their face, and stood behind them.

Targum Onkelos. The angel of the Lord who went before the camp of Israel passed by and came behind them; and the column of the cloud passed from before them and abode behind them.

The Angel of the LORD that accompanied Israel through the whole forty years of wandering in the wilderness was Jehovah, because Jehovah's name was in him, and he had the power to remit or retain Israel's sins.

Ex. 23:20-21. Behold, I send an Angel before you. ... Beware of him, ... for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him.

But the rabbis didn't want to say God's name was in the Angel, so they changed the word of God to say the Angel's words were said in God's name! And yet it's interesting they still chose to capitalize "My Angel" in this passage. By the way, there are no capital letters in the original Hebrew. It's up to the translators to capitalize whatever words they want.

Targum Onkelos. Behold, I send My Angel before thee. ... Take heed before Him, ... for He will not forgive your sins, for in My Name are His words.

Inside the shekinah glory cloud are four cherubs, the four beasts of Revelation 4:6-9. And at the very top of the cloud's tall, narrow, pillar-like, dreadful height, sat the Angel of the LORD.

Ezek. 1:4-28. A whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire enfolding itself, and a brightness was about it Out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, ... and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning ... As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful. ... And the likeness of the firmament, ... was as the color of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, ... and on the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. ... From the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, ... the

appearance of fire. ... This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

The Angel of the LORD dwelt in the tabernacle from the time of the Exodus until the time of David.

Tabernacle. Ex. 40:33-34. So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

Moses regularly spoke with the LORD, face to face; but the rabbis have him speaking with the voice of the LORD, word for word. The people only ever saw the shekinah glory, but once Moses saw the Angel of the LORD who dwells in the shekinah glory [Ezek. 1:26-27], but the rabbis have Moses seeing only the hand border of the shekinah glory.

Moses. Ex. 33:10-11. All the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door, ... and Jehovah יהוה spoke to Moses face to face. Exodus 33:21-23. I will ... cover you with my hand while I pass by, and I will take away my hand, and you will see my back parts. Deut. 34:10. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like to Moses, whom Jehovah יהוה knew face to face.

Targum Onkelos. All the people saw the column of the Cloud standing at the door of the tabernacle, ... and the Lord spoke with Mosheh word for word, - the voice of the word was heard, but the Majesty of the Presence was not seen. ... I will ... overshadow you with My Word ... and I will make the host of angels who stand and minister before Me to pass by, and you will see the handborder of the tephilla of My glorious Shekinah. ... No prophet has again risen in Israel like to Mosheh, because the Word of the Lord had known him to speak with him word for word.

Seventy-four men saw God, i.e. the Angel of the LORD, at one time on Mt. Sinai. The targums say they saw the glory of God, rather than God, and they are partly right, since they saw the pre-incarnate Yeshua, who is the visible glory of God.

The 70 Elders. Ex. 24:9-11. Then Moses went up, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And on the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand. Also, they saw God, and did eat and drink.

Targum Onkelos and Jonathan Ex. 24:10. “[They saw] the glory of the God of Israel. ... **Targum Jonathan Ex. 24:11.** They saw the glory of the Shekinah of the Lord.”

Joshua saw the angel of the LORD, and like Moses, was commanded to remove his shoes.

Joshua. Josh. 5:13-15. There stood a man over against [Joshua] And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship. ... And the Captain of the LORD’s host said, ... “Loose your shoe from off your foot; for the place whereon you stand is holy.”

And the Angel of the LORD dwelt at Shiloh from the time of Joshua to Samuel.

Shiloh. Josh. 18:1. The whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. **1 Sam. 4:21.** She named the child Ichabod, saying, “The glory is departed from Israel,” because the ark of God was taken.

When the Exodus journeyings and the conquest of Canaan were complete, the Angel of the LORD dismissed the people to their individual inheritances in the land.

Israel at Bochim. Jdg. 2:1-6. And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, “I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you to the land which I swore to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break my covenant with you, and you shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; you shall throw down their altars.’ But you have not obeyed my voice ... Wherefore ... I will not drive them out from before you, but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you.’ And ... when the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, ... the people

lifted up their voice, and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim, and they sacrificed there to the LORD. And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man to his inheritance to possess the land.

Gideon and Samson's parents saw the Angel of the LORD.

Gideon. Jdg. 6:22. Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord Jehovah! For I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face. And the LORD said to him, "You will not die."

Samson's Parents. Jdg. 13:11-22. Manoah ... came to the man [the Angel of the LORD], ... and offered [a meat offering] upon a rock to the LORD. And ... the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar ... And Manoah said to his wife, "We will surely die, because we have seen God."

And the Angel of the LORD dwelt in the temple at Jerusalem from the time of Solomon to Ezekiel.

Solomon's Temple. 2 Chr. 5:1, 13-14. The house of the LORD was finished ... Then the house was filled with a cloud ... The glory of the LORD... filled the house of God.

The Angel of the LORD slowly and reluctantly left the first temple just before it was destroyed.

Leaving the Temple. Ezek. 10:4, 18, 23. The glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house ... Then the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims ... And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood on the mountain which is on the east side of the city [the mount of Olives].

The Angel of the LORD visited the Israelites in Babylon. Like when ...

The Furnace in Babylon. Dan. 3:24-25. Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spoke, and said to his counsellors, "Didn't we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." He answered and said, "Lo, I see four men

loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they aren't hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Five hundred years later, the Angel of the LORD became flesh. "The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father," Jn. 1:14.

And he suddenly appeared at the second temple in Jerusalem, also called Herod's Temple since Herod had renovated it.

Herod's Temple. Hag. 2:9. The glory of this latter house [the second temple] will be greater than of the former [the first temple, Solomon's temple]. **Mal. 3:1.** I will send my messenger [John the Baptist], and he will prepare the way before me [God]; and the LORD, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple, even my Angel [מלאכי] of the Covenant, whom you delight in. **Jn. 2:13-15.** Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the temple those that sold, ... and the changers of money sitting, and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple.

And in the outer court of the temple, just yards from the holy of holies where he had dwelt with Israel throughout their entire 1000-year sovereign, national history, from the Exodus to the Babylonian Captivity; the caretakers of the temple, the Jewish leaders "sought ... to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath [in their opinion by healing on the sabbath], but also said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (Jn. 5:18). He answered, "Had you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (Jn. 5:46).

Appendix 3. The Seven Days of Creation

An exposition of Genesis 1-2 will necessarily face potential conflicts between the Bible and many generally accepted origin theories in the scientific community. I recommend the website AnswersInGenesis.org for further information about such issues.

The Two Problems: Formlessness and Emptiness

Gen. 1:1-2. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was **formless**, and **empty**, and darkness was on the face of the deep [water]. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters.

The Heaven and the Earth. At the beginning of the first day, God created space (heaven) and matter. He planned to create the earth in steps, like a divine potter, first creating the clay out of nothing, and then molding it. Like the way he revealed himself progressively through history as the Bible was completed over 1500 years, and as he brought Israel through many different phases.

He could not leave the earth in the raw form he created it in because he loves order and fulness. He solved the problem of formlessness by three days of dividing, and the problem of emptiness by three days of filling. On each respective day of filling, he filled the thing he had formed by dividing.

On day 1, the first day of dividing, God divided light from darkness. So on day 4, the first day of filling, he filled the light he had created on day 1 with the sun, and filled the darkness with the moon and stars. On day 2, the second day of dividing, he divided the clouds from the ocean via the sky. So on day 5, the second day of filling, he filled the sky with birds and the ocean with fish. On day 3, the third day of dividing, he divided the land from ocean. So on day 6, the third day of filling, he filled the land with animals and man.

THE SEVEN DAYS OF CREATION: GENESIS 1:1-2:3

Heaven and angels created. Earth created covered with water and darkness. Two problems: "The earth was formless and empty," Gen. 1:2.

3 Days Of DIVIDING to Provide Form	Day 1		Day 2	Day 3
	LIGHT	Dark- ness	Water Vapor	Water
			SKY	LAND & PLANTS
			Water	
3 Days Of FILLING to Fill Emptiness	Day 4		Day 5	Day 6
	SUN	MOON & STARS		ANIMALS & MAN
			BIRDS	
			& FISH	
Day 7 - Rested				

Three Days of Dividing

Three days of dividing provided form.

Day 1 - Divided Light from Darkness

Gen. 1:3-5. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ... And God **divided** the **light** from the **darkness**. ... *And the evening and the morning were the first day.*

Let there be light. On day one, God created light and energy.

Evolution can't be true because light, day, and night, existed before there were any sources of light, like the sun. Not only the sources of light exist, but also whatever energy comprises the light rays. God had the light rays existing and controlled in a day/night rotation before he created a light source.

God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God creates by speaking things into existence, like when he speaks prophecies through a prophet. (But we can’t speak things into existence contrary to what Charismaticism says.)

Rom. 4:17. God, who quickens the dead, and calls those things which are not as though they were. **Hos. 6:5.** I hewed them by the prophets [by prophesying judgment]; I have slain them by the words of my mouth.

We see the three persons of the Godhead in the first three verses of the Bible.

Gen. 1:1-3. God [the Father] created the heaven and the earth, ... and the Spirit of God [the Spirit] moved on the face of the waters, and God said [the Word, the Son, the Angel of the LORD], “Let there be light,” and there was light. **Jn. 1:1-3.** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... All things were made by him, and without him there wasn’t any thing made that was made.

Evening and morning were the first day. Evening consistently comes before morning in the Bible. Biblically, each day begins at sundown of the previous day. Spiritual light always existed. But before ‘physical’ light existed, darkness, the absence of physical light always ‘existed.’ Your ability to function each day depends somewhat on how you sleep the night before. Weeping comes before rejoicing. Suffering before glory.

Ps. 30:5. His anger endures but a moment; in his favor is life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. **Ps. 126:5.** They that sow in tears will reap in joy. **Heb. 12:2.** Jesus, ... for the joy that was set before him [on the other side of the cross], endured the cross. **1 Pet. 1:11.** The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that would follow. **1 Pet. 4:13.** Beloved, don’t think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Messiah’s sufferings, so that, when his glory will be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy. **1 Pet. 5:1.** I ... am ... a witness of the sufferings of Messiah, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed. **2 Cor. 4:17.** Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, produces for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Day 2 - Divided Water from Water

Gen. 1:6-8. And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it **divide** the **waters** from the **waters**,... and it was so. ... And the evening and the morning were the second day.

Let there be an expanse. On the second day, God formed the sky, the earth’s gaseous atmosphere. From the center of the earth going outward towards space, the earth began with no clear transitions from magma, to solid, to water, to water vapor. On the second day, God differentiated liquid from gas, creating the potential for the water cycle, and separating the water vapor in the clouds of the sky from the ocean- covered earth below.

The waters above the expanse. Before Noah’s flood, the clouds probably formed a canopy around the earth, protecting it from strong solar radiation. This could explain why men lived so long before the flood, but lifespans after the flood gradually declined to about 70 years like ours.

Gen. 5:27. All the days of Methuselah [who lived before the flood] were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died. **Ps. 90:10.** The days of our years are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

The cloud canopy kept the whole earth at about the same temperature, like in a greenhouse, so plants even grew in great abundance in Antarctica, as shown by the fossil record. But it didn’t look dark and unattractive, like modern cloudy days, because there wasn’t any dust in the clouds. And thus there was no rainbow in the sky before the flood.

Gen. 9:13. I do set my rainbow in the cloud, and it will be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

Noah’s flood began with earthquakes and the fast movement of the continents breaking out from Pangea, opening conduits to massive water chambers within the earth (the main source of the flood

waters), and volcanoes spewing massive amounts of dust into the sky. Water droplets formed around the dust, and it rained for the first time, and for forty days and nights, permanently destroying the cloud canopy.

The creatures that died in the flood were deposited into the sediments on the ocean floor according to weight, with ocean shelled animals etc. dispersed around the world, and land animals being deposited later because of their having fled to higher ground, and floating for some time after death. So although all fossils all over the earth were laid in sedimentary rock, it wasn't because almost every place on earth rose and fell from shallow inland seas to mountains over and over again, as modern geology asserts, in violation of the scientific principle that simpler explanations should be preferred over complex ones.

Many people don't realize that carbon-14 dating, which is fairly accurate, can only be used to date biotic things, and only back to about 60,000 years, and is probably not accurate to date things before the Noah's flood because of different carbon isotope levels in the air before the flood. It can't be used to date rocks and fossils.

Rocks are dated via various radiometric dating methods that measure how much radioactive isotopes remain in a given rock from the time it was magma until today. The weakness of these methods is not being able to know how much radiometric isotopes the sample began with at the time of its formation, and also because the results are often calibrated via a circular reasoning of dating the rocks by the fossils and the fossils by the rocks.

It took a year for the waters to gradually recede as the new magma on the new ocean floors cooled, became more dense, and sank. Huge valleys were formed quickly as the waters ran off the relatively soft layers of sediments the continents had been covered with, in contrast to our slow rates of erosion today. The dinosaurs and other large creatures died out because the earth no longer produced the great amount of vegetation they needed for food as

had been provided by the greenhouse effect of the cloud canopy before the flood. Btw, dinosaurs may not have been as fierce as their many-toothed fossils appear. Some evidence points to dinosaurs actually being birds, and pandas have canine teeth but eat mostly bamboo.

Gen. 2:5-6. The Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, ... but there went up a mist [NIV has 'streams came up'] from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. **Gen. 7:4.** I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living thing [on the land] that I have made I will destroy from off the face of the earth. **Gen. 7:11.** All the fountains of the great deep [within the earth] were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. **Gen. 8:5.** The waters decreased continually until the tenth month ... [when] the tops of the mountains became visible.

Jesus said Noah's flood was a cataclysmic judgment, like his return will be. And the apostle Peter said it destroyed the old world, not just some local valley near Babylon or something, as modernists claim.

Mt. 24:38-39. As in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and [they] didn't know until the flood came and took them all away; so will also the coming of the Son of man be. **2 Pet. 2:4-5.** God ... didn't spare the old world, but saved Noah, ... bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly. **2 Pet. 3:5-7.** For this they are willingly ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved to fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Day 3 - Divided Land from Water

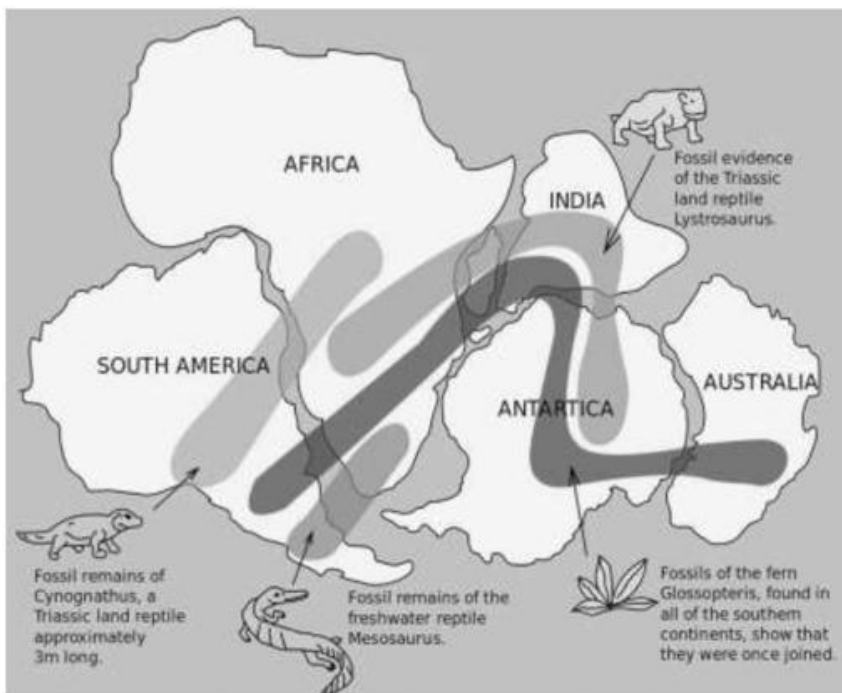
Gen. 1:9-11, 13. And God said, "Let the **waters** under the heaven be gathered together to one place, and let the dry **land** appear." And it was so. ... And God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the

fruit tree yielding fruit.” . And it was so. . And the evening and the morning were the third day.

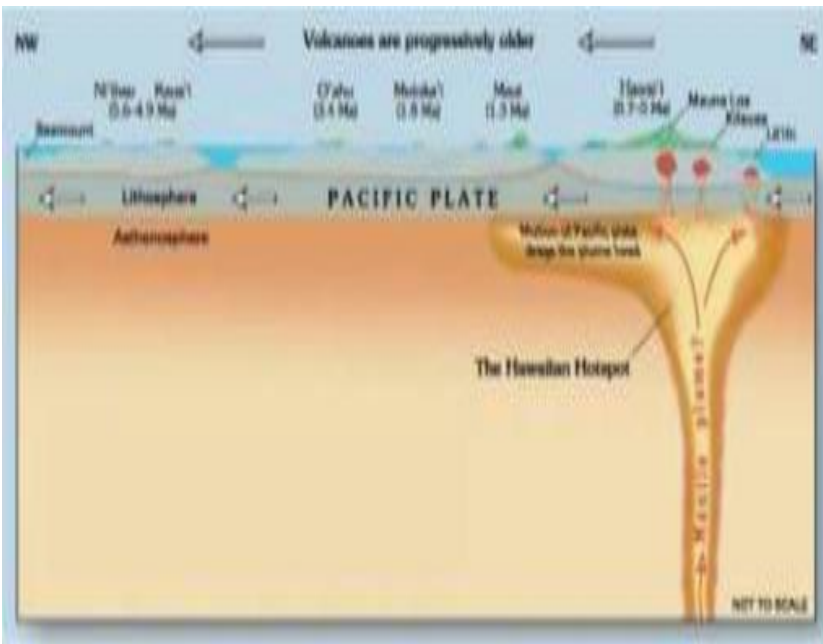
Let the dry land appear, ... and let the earth bring ... the herb yielding seed [like grains], and the fruit tree yielding fruit. On the third day, God formed one large continent of land with plants.

Evolution can't be true because plants were created on earth before the sun was created. Plants are alive, but they are only physical, like the rest of the land. Plants only have a body, whereas animals have body and soul, and man has body, soul, and spirit. Angels only have spirits. God was comprised of the Father who is spirit, the Holy Spirit who is spirit, and the angel of the LORD who was spirit until he became a man - body, soul, and spirit - at the incarnation.

Gathered together to one place. The idea of continental drift was rejected by the majority of the scientists until the late 1950's. But in Genesis 1, God had already said he gathered the waters into one place, which means the land was also all in one place, now called 'Pangea' by science. The diagram below shows how rock formations and fossils span multiple continents today.



The Hawaiian Island chain was formed by a movement of the earth's crust over a stationary hot spot that slowed over time. The islands formed earlier, like Midway in the west, are farther apart and worn down to atolls with beaches, whereas today the movement is so slow that now the volcanic eruptions keep adding to the Big Island, which still has mostly rocky shorelines.



Three Days of Filling

Three days of filling to fill the emptiness.

Day 4 - Filled with Sun, Moon, and Stars

Gen. 1:14-16, 19. And God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven.” ... And God made two great lights; the **greater light** [the sun] to rule the day, and the **lesser light** [the moon] to rule the night; he made the **stars** also. ... And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

The greater light, ... the lesser light, ... the stars also. On the first day of filling, God filled the light and the darkness he had separated it from on the first day of separating.

Evolution can't be true, because the earth existed before the stars, including the sun, did. The sun and moon were created for purposes

subservient to God's creation of the earth for man. Though the stars in the galaxies of the universe are vast and endlessly varied, they were all created almost as an afterthought for the sake of man. "Some stars would be nice," so "he made the stars also" (Gen. 1:16). Whether or not earth is at the center of the physical universe, it is definitely at the center of the logical universe based on God's purposes for man alone, which is why we never have and never will hear from 'aliens' (except from angels and demons).

As long as the sun, moon, and stars endure, God won't cast off Israel despite any of its sins and shortcomings.

Jer. 31:35-37. Thus says the Lord, which gives the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night. ... If those ordinances depart from before me, says the Lord, then [and only then] . I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done.

Day.5 - Filled with Fish and Birds

Gen. 1:20, 23. And God said, "Let the **waters bring forth** abundantly the moving creature that has life, and **fowl** that may fly above the earth in the open expanse of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moves which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind. . Fill the waters in the seas, and ... multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

Waters ... moving creature, ... and fowl that may fly. On the second day of filling, God filled the sky he had created on the second day of separating, and the waters he had separated out below the sky.

The moving creature that has life. Animals have the same kind of life in their bodies that plants do, but they also have a completely different kind of life in addition to that; a soul, that can desire and make decisions.

And God created great whales. Evolution can't be true because mammals like whales and porpoises only live that in water were created before all non-fowl land animals including insects and

lizards, etc. Even if the Hebrew word translated ‘whales’ in the KJV should be translated something like sea monsters instead, would that harmonize better with dominant modern scientific theories?

Fill the waters, ... multiply in the earth. God loves fulness in number and diversity. He loves fulness and maturity in men.

Heb. 6:1. Let us go on to perfection [completeness and maturity]. Jas. 1:3-4. The trying of your faith produces endurance. But let endurance have her perfect [complete] work, so that you can be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. 1 Jn. 1:4. These things we write to you so that your joy can be full.

Day 6 - Filled with Animals and Man

Gen. 1:24, 26a, 27, 31. And God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and **beast** of the earth after his kind,” and it was so. ... And God said, “Let us make **man** in our image.” ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. . And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Let the earth bring forth the ... beast of the earth and ... let us make man in our image. On the third day of filling, God filled the land that he had formed on the third day of dividing.

After his kind. Evolution can’t be true because things reproduce after their kind. A ‘kind’ is something like a ‘family’ in Taxonomy, like the Felidae family of cats and the Canidae family of dogs. Lions sometimes like to sit in boxes like your small house cat does, as YouTube will testify. Evolution is true within a kind, but not from one kind to another. We know we can selectively breed dogs over generations to produce many very different looking and behaving dogs, but all their potential differences had always been within their genes, not as a result of mutations. Natural selection can do the same thing, but not produce a dog from a cat via mutations. That’s why Noah didn’t have to fill the ark with every variety of animal, but only two from each family or possibly even suborder in some cases.

Evolution can't be true because it requires millions of years of living and dying generations to select advantageous random mutations via the survival of the fittest, but death didn't enter the world until after man was created. Jesus said Cain and Abel lived near at the beginning of creation, not millions of years afterward.

Gen. 2:17. Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it; for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die [but he killed two animals in place of their immediate physical death, Gen. 3:21].

Rom. 5:12. By one man sin entered into the world. Mk. 10:6. From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. Lk. 11:50-51. The blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, [will] be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel.

Beast, ... man, male and female. There's no conflict between Genesis 2 and Genesis 1. Genesis 1 gives the overall story, and Genesis 2 goes back and fills in the details as it relates to man, which is why Genesis 2 mentions the creation of man before the creation of animals, which were created earlier. The order was animals, man, woman. God created man from the dust of the ground and gave him a soul with desires and a will, just like he did the animals; but he also breathed into him, giving him a spirit with the ability to understand things by using words (1 Cor. 2:11-13), which animals don't have.

Gen. 2:7. The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living creature. Gen. 2:19. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air. Gen. 2:22. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, he made a woman, and brought her to the man.

He made a woman. I'm sure the angels were amazed to witness the creation of woman, because she was the only female being with spiritual understanding. God is male, and all angels are male according to the Bible, and men are male, but now God created a female being that shared the spiritual realm with God, angels, and

man. The early church celebrated woman's unique creation for her unique ministries in the headcovering church meeting observance described in 1 Corinthians 11. (See my booklet "The 1 Corinthians Headcovering: A Church Meeting Observance Like the Lord's Supper About the Special Ministries of Women.")

Job 38:4-6. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth, ... when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God [the angels] shouted for joy? 1 Cor. 11:7-10. Man ... is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have [the symbol of] authority on her head [during church meetings] because of the angels. 1 Cor. 4:9. We are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. 1 Tim. 3:16. God was manifest in the flesh, ... seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles. 1 Tim. 5:21. I charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Messiah, and the elect angels. 1 Pet. 1:12. Which things the angels desire to look into.

It was very good. God pronounced each day of creation except the second one as "good" (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 25). But only after he had created man and woman on the sixth day, did he pronounce it "very good" (Gen. 1:31)!

Gen. 1:31. God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

One Day of Resting

Day 7 - God Rested

Gen. 2:2. And on the seventh day, God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day.

God Is Our Creator

Ps. 100:3. Know that the Lord, he is God. It is he that has made us, and not we ourselves. We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.



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